

Towards a society based on mutual aid, voluntary cooperation & the liberation of desire

#25/Summer '90

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Anarchy

A journal of Desire Armed



Collage by Freddie Baer

SPECIAL ISSUE ON EASTERN EUROPE!

PLUS: John Zerzan's "Mass Psychology of Misery"



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Anarchy notes

In this issue

After a long wait, we're back with a new issue bursting with news from Eastern Europe! Freddie Baer has created the front cover collage and designed the back cover for this issue. Stefan Wray reports on the still small resurgence of the anarchist movement in Eastern Europe, while Will Guest reports on the severe ecological crisis in this region. Following another installment from Raoul Vaneigem's book *The Revolution of Everyday Life* on "Suffering," comes a wide-ranging and perceptive survey of "The mass psychology of misery" by John Zerzan, accompanied by a photoessay from Mikell Zhan. And this issue is rounded out graphically with photos by Scott Yoos and collages by Johann Humyn Being.

As many of those who have written to us in the last few months will realize, we continue to lag behind in the number of letters we are able to fit into each issue as compared to the number we receive, despite the ten full pages in this issue! We ask you to remain patient, we do intend to print every legible, understandable letter we receive—giving precedence to those received earliest and those which contain the most timely information. Our next issue will see the resumption of the debate over the new paper *Love and Rage* and the discussion of our by now distant "Children's Sexuality" issue (#19), both of which missed this issue due to lack of space.

North American Anarchist Review

With this issue, we also are publishing the second issue of the *North American Anarchist Review* as an insert. We still believe it is important to bring together libertarian publishers and readers in a more coherent and widespread way. We hope you like our efforts so far. If you're interested in helping with this effort by contributing to, distributing, or advertising in the NAAR, please contact us soon. Bookstores, anarchist centers, and other distributors, consider sending for bulk copies of NAAR #2 for free distribution. All you need to do is send us sufficient money for postage and handling. See the NAAR insert in this issue for details.

New schedule

Unfortunately, *Anarchy* is changing to a quarterly publication schedule with this issue. This change has become necessary in order for me to have more time to spend with my friends and family, and in order to slow down the large drain on my finances. Although we've seen a steadily increasing amount of support through subscriptions, contributions and larger newsstand sales, this support has not yet brought *Anarchy* to the point of paying for its own printing, postage and advertising costs. And though we're going to a quarterly publication schedule for the rest of the year, we don't necessarily intend to make this change permanent. If there is enough new support in the future, we will certainly consider returning to a bimonthly schedule again. But this must mean that *Anarchy* will begin bringing in enough financial contributions, subscribers and newsstand sales to become self-supporting, as well as that more people will begin contributing to the process of publishing and doing mailings. We'll have to wait and see.

If you'd like to help make *Anarchy* self-supporting, we encourage you to send gift subscriptions to friends, or just to send us an extra contribution to help us over the hump. At our present rate of growth, I expect that we could still reach 1,000 sub-

scribers by the end of this year. And we can still try for 2,000 newsstand sales per issue as well. But this will require a little extra help from our current subscribers and supporters to get the word out to more people that *Anarchy* is here! At the same time we've started advertising in a few more places this Spring and Summer in order to see how many potential subscribers are lurking out there who haven't yet heard of our existence—many still unaware that any North American anarchist movement exists at all! To those who have been supporting us to this point, we really appreciate all the help we've gotten. We want to continue publishing a challenging, critical and graphically stimulating journal, as well as working to improve it with each issue. We hope you'll agree that *Anarchy* has made a good effort so far. With your support we think it can go a lot farther in the future.

Next issues

Coming up, we're planning to do special issues on topics like "Children & Anarchy," "Work/Anti-Work," and "Women & Anarchy." We welcome any submissions for these special issues, though we can never guarantee ahead of time that submissions will be published.

Our next issue will feature more news from Eastern Europe which didn't make it into this issue: news, interviews and analyses from Poland, the Soviet Union, etc. We'll also feature a report of the recent Trieste anarchist meeting on Eastern Europe, as well as a lengthy report on the Italian movement by Stefan Wray.

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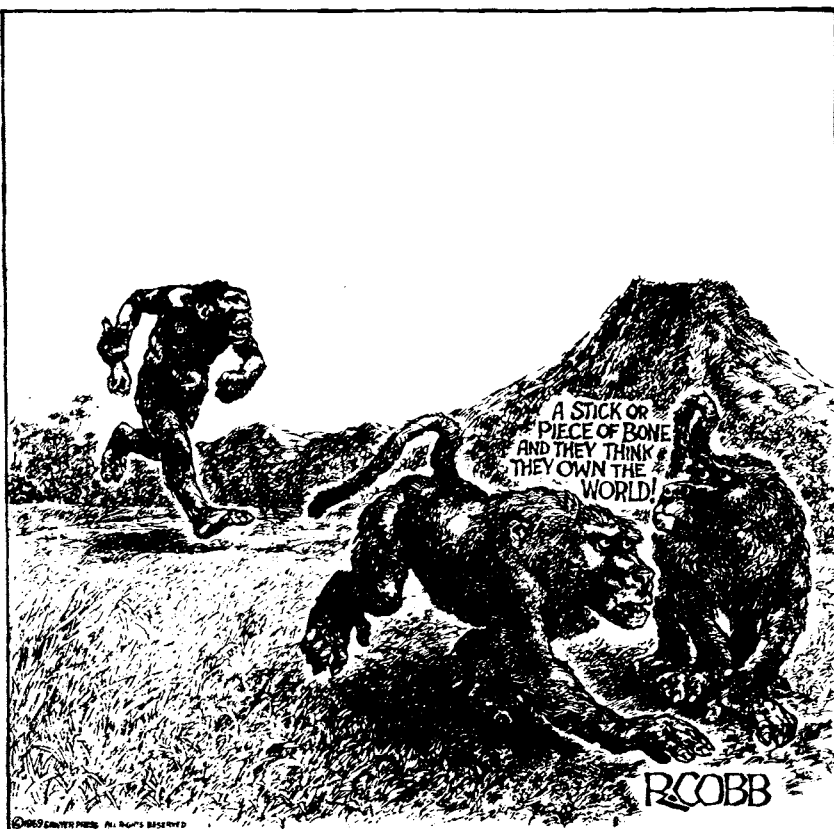
And once again we want to thank all our current sustaining contributors (as well as those who have sent smaller donations) for their special contributions! These contributions make it possible for us to continue publishing by lessening our financial worries. Our current sustainers include: B.K. of Canoga Park, CA.; B.B. of Numazu-shi, Japan; L.C., T.O., A.H., A.D. & S.H. of Columbia, MO.; G.M. of Yellow Springs, OH.; A.M. of Farmingdale, N.J.; S.H. of Brockport, NY.; D.A. of Carbondale, IL.; A.H. of New Braunfels, TX.; A.G. of Paris, France; L.P. of Detroit, MI.; P.B. of Alexandria, VA.; E.M. of Providence, RI.; L.A. of Chicago, IL.; and S.S. of Lake Orion, MI. Thank you all for your special support! Sustaining contributors to *Anarchy* donate \$50 to \$100 per year—which includes a First Class subscription.

-Lev Chernyi

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Send an SASE for a copy of our current list of members.



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Fighting back during the London Poll Tax riot this Spring. Photo from *Brand* #3(36)/Maj. '90

Earth First! organizes "Redwood Summer" Maxxam Corp. & FBI fight back!

The activist environmental group Earth First! has called for volunteers to move into Northern California this summer in order to put more heat on the big lumber corporations now engaged in frenzied destruction of the little remaining old-growth forest still around. Modeled on actions of the civil rights movement, "Redwood Summer" is intended to be merely a holding action to prevent as much logging in old growth areas as is possible while a concurrent attempt is being made to legislate some limits to current corporate policies amounting to outright pillage and total devastation. Predicated on a "non-violent" strategy of civil disobedience and respect for corporate property, Earth First!ers appear to be trading off the former lawless militance of some of their actions (which originally made the group's reputation) for a more mainstream and populist approach which no longer threatens to move beyond the limits of reformist, pressure-group politics. However, even this change in strategy wasn't

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ANARCHY CONTACT NETWORK

This is a listing of addresses of groups and individuals who would like to see the growth and development of a post-situationist, anti-ideological revolutionary tendency. The list will help enable those participating to make regional contacts and intercommunication links.

If you'd like to see your address added to this listing please write to us, explaining where you stand and why you wish to be listed. Neither "good intentions" nor vague commitments to "anarchism" will any longer be accepted as adequate reasons for inclusion.

(Note: We are only compiling this list, we are not endorsing the positions of those who have asked to be listed.)

Craig Stuntz
531 Westchester Way
Birmingham, MI. 48009

Black Rose (Boston)
POB 2684
Jamaica Plain, MA. 02130

Barry Wright
Box 175
Green River, WY. 82935

James Garner
821 Laurel St.
Santa Cruz, CA. 95060

Andy Christ
910 Hudson Ave.
Iowa City, IA. 52240

T.H. Metz
215 Ronalds #4
Iowa City, IA. 52245

John Rux
POB 7151
Atlanta, GA. 30357-0151

Karen Elliot
POB 3502
Madison, WI. 53704

Scott Henry
555 Peck Rd.
Spencerport, NY. 14559

**Assn. for Ontological
Anarchy**
c/o Autonomedia
Box 568
Brooklyn, NY. 11211

Ron Delahunt
POB 1184
Cambridge, MA. 02238

Lone Wolf Collective
Box 53246
D.C., 20009

Brendan Flanagan
2267 E. 8th St.
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Ethan Davidson
455 Eddy, #E1496
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511 S. 13th St.
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528 5th Street
Brooklyn, NY. 11215

Masia Attila Mugmuk II
New Jersey State Prison
CN 861 - 58157 2A-7
Trenton, NJ. 08625

Steve Wood
POB 2072
Madison, WI. 53701-2072

Trevor
POB 23061
Knoxville, TN. 37933-1061

Tad Kopley
POB 401721
Brooklyn, NY. 11240

David Effigy
1803 Mission St., #172
Santa Cruz, CA. 95060

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For submissions, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope with all articles, stories, photos, and graphic art if you wish to have them returned. Short news and comment articles which are used in the "The sad truth," "Radical news in review," and "International anarchist news" may be edited for brevity and style. Other submissions (features) will be edited only with the author's permission. Until we can afford to remunerate authors, photographers, and graphic artists for their published contributions we will give free issues or subscriptions, or other appropriate tokens of our appreciation. The deadlines for submission are: Dec. 1st for the Winter issue, March 1st for the Spring issue, June 1st for the Summer issue, & Sept. 1st for the Fall issue.

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"The whirligig of time has its revenges."

--B.A.G. Fuller

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The Sad Truth

Chris Filmer was a libertarian communist revolutionary who wrote under the name "Chris Ecks" in a number of publications, including *Angry Workers' Bulletin*, *Fifth Estate*, and a few early issues of *Ideas and Action*. He was killed in a car crash at around 4:50 pm on the 31st of July, 1989. Chris drove his Volkswagen van over the edge of a 300 foot high cliff on the Pacific Coast Road, Highway One, south of San Francisco, at a place called Devil's Slide. He was 35 years old. Chris and I were friends.

Chris began his evolution towards a perspective of subversion and revolution in the modern world in the middle and late seventies with involvement in groups in the Trotskyist milieu. Moving from sympathies with the Young Socialist Alliance, and later, the Spartacus League, in the early eighties, Chris grew to reject the absurdity of Trotskyism and the counter-revolutionary essence of all forms of Leninism. He became involved in the San Francisco-Berkeley area anarchist milieu in the early eighties.

In all phases of his political evolution, Chris was a partisan of class warfare, the fight of the dispossessed classes against capitalist social relations and against the rich, against their class power, against the mass culture of the rich and their values. Throughout the development of Chris's increasingly extremist politics, he recognized the struggle between social classes as the most fundamental and central basis of any possibility for revolutionary social transformation. He was very concerned with the psychology of internalized repression that this society instills in all of us. Chris Filmer felt a very acute, personal need for revolution in the modern world, against capital, its states and cops (including the ones inside of us), and the world they make.

Chris was involved in housing struggles in Berkeley, California in the late '70s and early '80s, in efforts to get together and take action with other tenants of K&S Realty, the largest private landlord in Berkeley at that time. Chris and I were also involved in the organization of a number of rent strikes among tenants of Reza Valiye, a notorious Berkeley slumlord, a "cockroach capitalist" who is a butt of much local humor in Berkeley. Chris got involved in anarchist groups around the publications *Ideas and Action* and *No Middle Ground* in 1983. We walked picket-lines, went to lefty demonstrations and tried to present a different kind of perspective. As a part of a mob of anarchists and punk rockers, we went to crash several "Debutants' Balls" and sing subversive Christmas Carols inside department stores in downtown San Francisco the weekend before Christmas in 1984—a fine, subversive, rowdy fun event. Chris was the main person behind "As The World Burns," an anarchist and left-communist meeting space that existed for a year on Telegraph Avenue in Oakland.

In October 1985, during the annual "Fleet Week" events in San Francisco, we gave out leaflets and talked to sailors and marines from the U.S. Pacific fleet about the "quasi-mutinies" in the American Armed Forces during the Vietnam War period, the importance of those rebellions in the defeat of the United States in Indochina, the significance of mass mutinies in ending wars and initiating revolutions. Chris tried to sustain this kind of communication at the naval base in Alameda, California. He attempted to initiate a process of fraternization, and saw the breakdown of discipline among "workers in uniform," the enlisted people in the imperial machine, as one of the most important issues in an authentically anti-capitalist praxis. Chris was for a radical working class movement among enlisted people, for mass mutiny during the next war, every war. Not for peace, but for revolution, a part of an armed social movement for the destruction of the capitalist state. Chris saw this activity as being in opposition to the vapid moralizing and self-indulgent theatrics of the so-called "peace movement," whose ideology Chris called "Passive-ism."

In '86 and '87 we were involved in collecting food and money for the Watsonville Cannery strikers. We were involved in the strike support committee in San Francisco from an explicitly anti-union perspective. Chris also got involved with the actions of the Homeless Liberation Front, an active core of homeless people squatting houses and causing trouble for the University of California and the leftist city government in Berkeley. Chris saw a great radical potential in these direct actions and



Chris Filmer, 1954-1989 Death of a revolutionary

self-organization by the East Bay's homeless. He was always trying to make links in common between the struggles of renters and homeless people, with an objective of abolishing the payment of rent being one aspect of the need for a mass, collective attack on all forms of market relations, to abolish the acts of buying and selling that fuck over all working class and poor people. An expression of the need for common action between unemployed and employed wage-slaves, between working-class civilians and "workers-in-uniform." Chris tried to break down false barriers.

Chris was very modest and self-effacing. He was a very gentle, kind, and freely loving man. He was a fine painter and writer. He could never stand pretentiousness or inauthenticity of

any kind, especially among self-styled "revolutionaries." Chris didn't suffer from excessive politeness, and always pointed out hypocrisy and role-playing when he saw it. People were drawn to Chris, a very physically beautiful man, brilliant, with many talents and interests in many things. Many of them were phonies, he had no use for the company of such people and always told them so to their faces, and walked away from them. He was admirably stubborn. He was a little arrogant at times, but he had no real meanness in him. If Chris could be said to have had any real failing, it was that he wasn't able to be cruel enough to his enemies. Chris didn't have the capacity for conscious cruelty that the victims of exploitation have got to nurture and develop for their

enemies.

Chris was very aware; he recognized the depth of our dilemma, for the exploited, fundamental class and for humanity as a species. He was too aware to find any hope in picking coffee-beans for the world's sexiest capitalist state in Nicaragua, the dead-end of reformism, the left and its various nationalist, hierarchic and statist rackets.

As a communist-with-a-small-"c", Chris often criticized the relentless self-absorption, a-historicism and stupid contempt for the working class of the contemporary anarchist milieu. He grew disenchanted with the local anarchist scene, with Bay Area anarchists' cliquishness and denial of a need for sustained activity amounting to more than exercises in mutual back-patting. Their anti-intellectualism and naive identity with long-past defeats, like Spain in the '30s, the manipulative and duplicitous leftist militants who put out some of the more well known publications. I think he was profoundly disappointed by many of the people he dealt with in this milieu.

About a year and a half before he died, Chris rediscovered occluded memories of having been sexually abused as a child by his alcoholic father. In despair, Chris came to feel that all that goes on among us is predetermined by the hurtful experiences of childhood, that we are essentially powerless and doomed to act accordingly. He lost all hope. The more aware he became, the more it distressed and crushed him. He couldn't stand the pain of living in a society as brutish and stupid as this one. A society whose every institution is as richly deserving of extinction as the institutions of this Hobbesian shit-democracy, the United States. He couldn't wait, didn't pace himself, he needed release now. So he died. He was so gentle that it killed him. In the long running series of lies, exploitation and mass murder we call bourgeois civilization, he's just one casualty among several hundred million. But he was our closest friend and companion, and we loved him. Now he's dead. Everyone who cared for him is devastated by the loss of our friend, Chris.

Max Anger

So we'll go no more a-roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And love itself must have rest.

Though the night was made for loving
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a-roving
By the light of the moon.

Byron

Third year of the Intifada begins; A view from the Israeli peace movement

December 9, 1989, the whole of the Gaza Strip and large parts of the West Bank were under curfew—imprisoning a million people in their homes—to prevent "disturbances" on the second anniversary of the Intifada. Fresh military forces were brought in, to help enforce the curfews; in Nablus, more than two thousand soldiers conducted house-to-house searches. The police mobilized large forces to maintain control over the Arab part of "unified" Jerusalem—which is officially annexed to Israel.

The peace movement also mobilized: demonstrations took place in Nazareth, Kafr Kasm, Umm-el-Fahm and smaller Arab towns and villages in Israel. Hundreds of Jews and Arabs formed a human chain across downtown Haifa. In Jerusalem, five thousand marched under the slogan "Make Peace Now—with the PLO!" A head of the march, 143 large photographs were carried—those of all the 143 children, Palestinian and Israeli, who got killed during the Intifada.

At about the same time that the Peace Now march ended in Jerusalem, an army patrol entered Bani-Na'im, forty kilometers to the south, where thousands of villagers were also holding a march. Those closest to the village entrance barred the soldiers' way, throwing

stones and empty bottles. The soldiers opened fire, killing a young woman. More villagers came out of the village center and joined the struggle; one of them was killed, too. The following morning, a commentator on Israeli radio remarked: "We have entered the third year of the Intifada. So far, it looks pretty much the same as the previous two..."

In December 1987, Israel's military and political leaders were confident of ending, within a few weeks, what they then termed "the riots in Judea, Samaria and Gaza." In December 1989, the most which the General Staff dares promise is "a reduction in the level of violence." Little is heard any more even of Ariel Sharon's boasts that he could "do better."

The Palestinians have shown themselves capable of endurance and persistence far beyond what anybody believed possible two years ago. The euphoria of the first Intifada months, or of the November 1988 Declaration of Independence, is long gone; every slow and agonizing step towards the negotiations table is paid for with blood, yet the Palestinians continue daily with their grim and determined struggle.

Intifada life includes countless deprivations and humiliations, in which the Palestinians are at the mercy of any soldier's whim. Most deeply

distressing are the periodic raids in which large army forces descend upon a village or neighborhood at a late night hour. Operatives of the Shabak arrive at such raids with detailed lists of the local "subversives," complete with their names, ages, physical descriptions and the location of their houses. They are taken off to detention, interrogation—often involving torture—and long terms of imprisonment, with or without trial. The Shabak lists are based on information compiled through its large network of spies and informers, who are often blackmailed into this role. The informers and collaborators are deeply hated. The Intifada's masked-faced "soldiers" are busy searching them out. Many of those discovered are killed; sometimes, their mutilated bodies are displayed in the streets, as a warning to others.

Palestinian leaders are aware of the grave dangers inherent in this practice, and the potential corrosive effects on the fabric of Palestinian society—effects which may outlast the occupation. Stating that the killing of collaborators should be a last resort only, the Intifada leadership has established a set of limitations: thorough verification of a person's guilt and discussion of each case in higher echelons, before action is taken; the use of lesser measures, such as social pressure, to make a collaborator mend his ways or leave the community on which he is spying. In the town of Beit Sahur, well-known for its dedication to mass non-violent struggle, no collaborators have been killed so far, though one was ban-

Continued on page 23

International anarchist news

Pacific-Northwest @ gathering report

A regional anarchist gathering for the Pacific-Northwest (British Columbia, Washington and Oregon) was held on the weekend of January 26-29 1990. On the Friday evening a welcoming was held for out of towners. Saturday and Sunday were full days of workshops, discussions and presentations, with over 200 people attending throughout the weekend. Free food was provided, and the Native Education Centre, where the gathering was held, added to the informal and relaxed atmosphere.

Twenty workshops were scheduled. The workshops included: a presentation on the 18th anniversary of Bloody Sunday by the Irish Solidarity Committee, urban organic gardening, a discussion on radical environmentalism & social ecology, squatting, and animal liberation. An anarchist-feminist workshop focussed on challenging the stereotypical definitions of the feminine & masculine. The Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en gave a presentation on their land title action (which has been covered by anarchist papers such as *No Picnic, Open Road, & Ecomedia Vancouver*). There was also a discussion on other Native American struggles such as the one at Big Mountain, and on the connections between apartheid systems of repression in S. Africa and N. America. A group called Prostitutes & Other Women for Equal Rights (P.O.W.E.R.) discussed the murders of sex-trade workers in Vancouver over the last few years, comparing them to the recent Montréal massacre. One

workshop, entitled the Pacific Northwest & the Right Wing, included a discussion of the Aryan Nations base in Hayden Lake, Idaho. Two workshops were held on tactics of resistance—one focussing on small group and individual actions, the other on demonstrations.

There was also a separatist Wimmings Empowerment workshop, which resulted in local Vancouver women organizing a monthly get-together, as well as the planning of a regional women's gathering which will possibly be held in Seattle this Summer. A men's "consciousness raising" workshop was held at the same time. Other workshops included Wimmings Health Issues & Self-Help and Combatting Violence Against Wimmings. Workshops on Queer Anarchist Networking and one on anti-racism were cancelled for lack of attendance.

An International Solidarity & Revolutionary Resistance discussion focussed on arguing that anarchism should develop a positive perspective on national liberation struggles—"the question was presented as 'how do we support them,'" rather than "as a question of 'do we or don't we support them.'" A proposal for organizing a gathering specifically focussing on international solidarity and anti-imperialism was put forward.

Since the gathering a monthly anarchist coffeehouse and an anarchist-feminist group have been started. Proceeds from the gathering after expenses totalled about \$450. Two hundred dollars was donated to the Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en and \$50 was donated to P.O.W.E.R. The rest of the money was saved to finance other projects and/or proposed gatherings.

Source: *Endless Struggle* #12 (POB 69601 Stn.K, Vancouver, B.C. V5K 4W7, Canada).

Bonanno & Stasi in Italy

The right to life isn't begged for; it is taken!

On February 2, 1989 Alfredo Bonanno and Pippo Stasi, two Italian anarchists, were arrested for an attempted robbery. In October '89 they were sentenced, Bonanno to five and a half years and Stasi to four years eight months. Their appeal was set for this Spring.

The two were arrested during an attempted robbery of a jeweller's shop in the Italian town of Bergamo. After a few hours of the regular police hospitality, the two were charged with armed robbery and assault. And, after their identities were discovered, the two were informed they would be "fit up" with some unsolved robberies, one of which included a murder. This frame-up would consist of charging the two with an April 7, 1987 robbery and resulting murder, as well as another robbery on March 9, 1985, both in Bergamo.

However, from the immediate outset Stasi and Bonanno placed their attempted expropriation firmly into the context of the broader social struggle. The two anarchists declared that they had attempted the robbery "exclusively for personal reasons..." and because they "didn't have jobs and needed the money." They stated that they considered the redistribution of wealth in a society based on social and economic inequality to be a practice concurrent with revolutionary struggle. From the very beginning the two made no attempt to deny their attempted expropriation and refused any defense committees or legal maneuvers—moving the situation from one of a question of "guilt" or "innocence" to that of the broader class struggle.

Accompanying the threatened police frame-up was the usual attempt to paint the anarchists as "terrorists." This began with the mass media faithfully reproducing the innuendos put forward by the cops. To the attempted frame-up, Bonanno and Stasi denied any involvement in the unsolved robberies dragged up from the police archives. Comrades in Italy and internationally organized demonstrations, pickets, leaflets and actions in solidarity with the two, demanding their release and showing that they were not isolated—that the legal farce would not occur without resistance. No doubt all of this was a contributing factor to the fact that during the October trial the frame-up charges weren't introduced. However, adding to the "terrorist" angle that had been presented, cops carried out raids on anarchist houses and offices throughout Italy, most recently in De-

cember of 1989.

Both Stasi and Bonanno have been involved in the revolutionary movement for a number of years, contributing theoretically to the *Anarchismo* and *Provocazione* papers in Italy, and to the paper *Insurrection* in England. And in practice they have been involved in various areas. Stasi was particularly well-known in Palermo where he was involved in the anti-nuclear and anti-militarist struggles, and was a member of the Palermo Anarchist Group. Bonanno was especially known for his extensive writings, and most recently for his book *From Riot to Insurrection* (published in English by Elephant Editions in London), as well as a number of other pamphlets and essays. It was these writings which led to his being arrested and persecuted in the past for "instigation to revolt," "condoning criminal offenses," etc.

To portray this incident as one of a robbery plain and simple would be to ignore the context in which Bonanno and Stasi themselves place the action. In his introduction to the book *Anarchism and Violence; Severino Di Giovanni in Argentina*, Bonanno wrote that "there have always been comrades who include the methods of direct action, armed struggle and expropriation in the struggle against exploitation. On the other hand there have always been those who are against these methods, in favor of propaganda and libertarian educationalism alone." There have, indeed, been some circles of the movement which view the expropriation as an actual "crime," concluding that robbery cannot be a part of the revolutionary struggle. However, expropriation happens every minute of every day in every part of the world. Shoplifting, welfare frauds, check frauds, robberies, and food riots have always been methods by which the exploited have attempted to take back a little of that which is denied them by capital and state. These are methods of survival that too often take on repressive means (too much force, gangs, targeting other exploited people, etc.), but which are in general a natural reaction to the vast economic exploitation and absence of community in capitalist societies. In short, they are primitive means of taking back some of the wealth stolen by the capitalist through their more sophisticated strategies of social expropriation.

The legal apparatus brands all expropriation carried out by the exploited as "illegal" and "criminal," while supporting and defending the "legal" exploitation and everyday robbery which

The anarchist scene

Compiled by Lev Cherny

MEDICAL EXPERIMENTS ON AMERICAN PRISONERS is a new publication of Air Water Earth (POB 311712, New Braunfels, TX. 78131). This 12-page pamphlet by Ann Howe details a few of the sometimes gruesome medical experiments done on U.S. prisoners with complete disregard for their health and welfare. No price given. Send a contribution for a copy.

ARM THE SPIRIT (Box 475, 253 College St., Toronto, Ontario M5T 1R5 Canada) is a relatively new non-profit distribution service that carries literature on anarchism, animal liberation, squatting, situationism, anti-fascism, prisoner solidarity, anarchy-feminism. Send an SASE (in Canada) or a contribution for their new catalog.

EDICIONES MADRE TIERRA (Parque Vosa 12, 28933 Móstoles, Spain) has an 8-page listing of Spanish-language anarchist books, including titles by Peter Kropotkin, José Peirats and Abraham Guillen. Send a contribution for a copy.

THE GREAT ATLANTIC RADIO CONSPIRACY (2743 Maryland Ave., Baltimore, MD. 21218) has a new series of ten radio/tape programs which round out its 17th year of political radio. The new series includes many titles which will be of interest to anarchists, including "The Autonomes," "The Ancient Forests," "The Politics of Language" and "The War on Drugs." Past series still available include titles like "The Anarchist Quiz Tape," "Utah Phillips" and "The Invasion of Grenada." G.A.R.C. has a catalog available. Individual tapes are \$6.00 each. We highly recommend that anyone with access to the airwaves check out some of these tapes. We've aired many of these tapes in the past on a local Columbia radio station.

THE DIRECTORY OF ALTERNATIVE & RADICAL PUBLICATIONS (Alternative Press Center, POB 33109, Baltimore, MD. 21218) includes several anarchist and related publications amongst hundreds of others. In its new 1990-91 edition. Copies of this 8-page directory can be obtained for \$3 each.

THE B.A.D. BRIGADE (POB 1323, Cambridge, MA. 02238) has a new broadside out titled "Abolish all Prisons!" Send an SASE for a copy.

ROAD KILL AND TIME TO ACT! are two booklets of "eco-anarchist poetry" by Rabinowitz (POB 904, Concrete, WA. 98237). *Road Kill* is available for \$2.50, *Time to Act!* for \$1-1.50.

PRESSURE DROP PRESS (POB 460754, San Francisco, CA. 94146) is working on a new book to be titled *Sabotage in the American Workplace*. They are looking for contributions— anecdotes and stories from people that have utilized various forms of sabotage in their workplace—whether as a weapon against boredom, harassment, poor working conditions, or as a tool of political action.

occurs in the factories, stores and other sites of wage slavery and commodity exchange. The laws are there to protect the rich and powerful, with only a few token crumbs thrown to the vast majority of exploited and enslaved. Against this, like a brick through a bank window, Stasi and Bonanno reaffirm the revolutionary practice of expropriation, shattering the racket of the social "peace" which accommodates the everyday violence of authority and capital. It was in this same way that anarchists struck in the 1920s, '30s, etc.: Durruti, Ascaso, Sabate, Roscigna & Di Giovanni, expropriating large amounts of money which was put into building resistance, purchasing weapons, explosives

REDWING BLACKBIRD DISTRIBUTION (Bill Withers, POB 2042, Decatur, GA. 30030-2042) is a non-profit distributor with a new anarchist mail-order catalog (mostly periodicals) available for \$1.00.

THE EGO AND HIS OWN, the original English-language version of the book by Max Stirner, is again available by mailorder from Western World Press (POB 366, Sun City, CA. 92381). This is a paperback reprint of the 1963 edition published by the Libertarian Book Club of New York. As the publisher, Robert Sagehorn says, this book is "An incredible and awesome and most controversial book on freedom versus authority, the individual contra society, which many have made use of, seldom with any mention of the source." Most highly recommended. Copies are \$8.95 postpaid, or \$9.50 postpaid for those (un)lucky enough to live in California.

THE JOE HILL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (contact: John Sillito, Weber State College, Ogden, UT. 84408-2901) is presenting a memorial conference marking the 75th anniversary of his execution by the state of Utah at the University of Utah Marriott Library on November 15-17th.

THE NEW 1990 LOOMPANICS UNLIMITED book catalog is out. Loompanics Unlimited (POB 1197, Port Townsend, WA. 98368) are "Publishers & Sellers of Unusual Books" as their motto claims, with 230 pages worth in the latest catalog. In response to a recent letter in *Anarchy* asking about how to make a living without working at a job, Loompanics proprietor Mike Hoy has asked to bring attention to some of the books he sells, including *Marketing your Arts and Crafts* and *Profits from your Backyard Herb Garden*. Most of these books are oriented towards right-wing or libertarian-capitalist perspectives. No price is given, but I'd send a few bucks if you want to receive a copy of this controversial catalog.

AMOK FOURTH DISPATCH (POB 861867, Terminal Annex, Los Angeles, CA. 90086-1867) is another catalog of unusual books. This one is subtitled "Sourcebook of the Extremes of Information in Print" and weighs in at 350+ pages, including everything from psychiatric tyranny to CIA torture manuals. With a large section on "situationism" and many anarchist titles among hundreds and hundreds of others. This edition is selling for \$8.95.

Due to severe computer problems during production of this issue, there may be a couple announcements missing from this column, if so we apologize for the omission(s). If you have announcements concerning anarchist gatherings, new publications, or other anarchist activities or projects which our readers might find of use, you can send them to: Attn. Anarchist Scene, c/o C.A.L., POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446.

and for publishing magazines and books. Though this form of practice has its unavoidable dangers and excesses, it has been and will remain a valid part of the international anarchist movement. Questions of "legality" and "illegality" are posed primarily by the judicial apparatus of state and capital, and by those who follow its logic. For the rest of us, there can only be total solidarity with the Bonanno and Stasi.

"The right to life isn't begged for, it is taken."
-Alex Jacob, France, 1905.

Based on an article in *Endless Struggle* (POB 69601, Vancouver, B.C. V5K 4W7, Canada).

"Redwood Summer"

Continued from page 3

enough to prevent the recent car-bombing (and the subsequent attempted FBI/police frame-up) of Earth First! activists Judi Bari and Daryl Cherney in Oakland, California.

Maxxam is one of the big lumber corporations which has most to lose if the Redwood Summer strategy is successful. In 1985 Maxxam, under the direction of Charles Hurwitz, bought out Pacific Lumber which had been previously following a policy of sustained-yield logging. Pacific Lumber owned 300 square miles of forest, including the largest unprotected coastal redwood forest in the world, the 3,000 acre Headwaters Forest. Hurwitz, a Houston billionaire, has frequently been the subject of federal investigations for his corporate profiteering—including a criminal allegation that he conspired with a secret group of inside traders (including former

arbitrageur, now prisoner, Ivan Boesky) to buy Pacific Lumber in violation of Securities and Exchange Commission laws for \$754 million in junk bonds.

In 1984-85 Pacific Lumber cut 170 million board feet of lumber. Under Hurwitz in 1988-89 Maxxam increased the slaughter to 350 million board feet. This summer Maxxam plans to destroy 560 acres of ancient growth redwoods in Headwaters Forest. This Spring Maxxam secretly bulldozed a 28-foot-wide road a mile into this forest in violation of the State Forest Practices Act and the California Environmental Quality Act. Maxxam would like to pillage as much of this area as possible before there is any chance that the Forest and Wildlife Protection Initiative comes before California voters in November. However, Maxxam is not the only big lumber corporation thrown into a frenzy by the increasing pressure to stop old growth logging. Georgia-Pacific and Louisiana-Pacific are also increasing their own rates of pillage. -Lev

Alternative media review

With this issue I'm going to begin remarking on only those publications which I find of exceptional interest. Others will still be listed in the lower reaches of this review column, but without much in the way of comment. I'm doing this in order to improve my chances of ever catching up on the large volume of periodicals we receive. As always, we are happy to exchange publications with other "alternative" periodical publishers. So, if you never see your favorite alternative publication reviewed here, it's much more likely because its publisher doesn't want to exchange with us rather than vice versa.—Lev

ART PAPERS Vol.14, #2/Mar.-April '90 (POB 77348, Atlanta, GA. 30357) is an impressive, 72-page, oversized journal of "Contemporary Art in the Southeast." This issue is devoted to "noise culture," which Alan Sondheim defines as all the alternative cultures which have developed since the media death of "the counterculture" of the '60s and '70s. It includes pieces by John Held on "Postal static: Mailbox magic & madness," Bill Withers on "Revolutionary publications and trance forming art," "Hark terrarium peppers" by Elizabeth Was, Mike Gunderloy's "The meta-network, or A battle with footnotes," a couple interviews and many, many reviews focussing on the Southeast. Subscriptions are \$18/year (6 issues). (Single copies are available for \$4.50 postpaid from Redwing Blackbird, POB 2042, Decatur, GA. 30030-2042.)

PRISON NEWS SERVICE/THE MARIONETTE #23[& #47]/Jan. & #24[& #48]/Mar.'90 (POB 5052, Stn. A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5W 1W4) is now a combined 8-page tabloid. During its existence this publication has provided a wealth of information on prison struggles all over North America and elsewhere. Issue #23 includes an article on the current push for increased repression in the U.S. titled "Bushbo, Burgo and Benbo: Big Brother speak," a piece on police wiretapping titled "Big Brother is listening," news of the hunger strikes in Spain by G.R.A.P.O. & P.C.E.(r), and in the U.S. at the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility, as well as news of other cases. Issue #24 includes a well-done story titled "Mohawk Nation divided: Conflict at Akwesasne-St. Regis." Send a contribution for a sample copy.

A NO RECORD DEAL (Pressure Drop Press, POB 460754, San Francisco, CA. 94146) isn't a periodical, but then it doesn't fit into any other easy category either. With typical record album packaging—but without the vinyl inside—this is an attempt at a critique of commodity packaging through the commodity packaging of critique. Though whether it succeeds or not will depend on the attitude of the "consumer." It includes several pieces: a couple large-sized, double-sided posters, a post-card, and a 24-page booklet of collage, subverted advertisements, and explanatory texts—all nicely done. "The might and power of the military machine pales in comparison to that of the corporate selling machine." (From the booklet) Copies are \$6.00 postpaid.

Artpaper Vol.9, #6/Feb., #7/Mar., #8/April, #9/May & #10/Summer '90 (VAIS, 119 N. 4th St, #303, Minneapolis, MN. 55401) is a well-produced, 28 to 36-page tabloid covering the arts scene and more. Issue #6 is a strong issue featuring Peter Lamborn Wilson on "Art and chaos," a halfway critical discussion "The treatment ethos" by Jeremiah Creedon, and Bob Black's interesting review of the recent I.C.A. show on the Situationist International titled "The realization and suppression of situationism." Issue #7 includes a piece on "Vernon Bellecourt v. the FBI" by Mordecai Spektor, and "An interview with Dorit Cypis" by Vince Leo. Issue #8 includes "Chris Gunderon on the revolution," "Disconnecting gay phone sex" by David Anger, and "The greening of design" by Adelheid Fischer & Paul Rothstein. Issue #9 includes Jeremiah Creedon's "Bringing the war home" (on the so-called "war on drugs"), and "The transparent prison" by Mordecai Spektor. Recommended. Subscriptions are \$20/year (10 issues).

ALSO RECEIVED:

The Printer's Devil #8/Autumn '89 (Mother of Ashes Press, POB 135, Harrison, ID. 83633-0135) is a very useful and interesting 30-page annual subtitled "Graphic Arts for the Small Press." This issue includes many letters, articles on "Spirit duplicating, a personal view" by Terry Owen and "Software choices for small presses" by Lawrence San, as well as columns by Fred Woodworth, Colin Hinz, and Art Droll. Sample copies are available on request, but send a donation! (Unfortunately, the publisher's address is in the process of changing, so it may be hard to reach them through mail forwarding.)

Maximum RocknRoll #82/Mar. & #84/May '90 (POB 288, Berkeley, CA. 94701) remains the premier punk zine with 128-pages of coverage. This issue includes the usual scads of letters, lots of columns, news analysis on East & West Germany, scene reports from the U.S., U.K., Italy, Australia, & Turkey), an article on "Homelessness in America" band interviews (including Cringer, Serial Killers, Dead Elvis, No Use for a Name, Industrial Suicide and Sofa Head), plus a long interview of Alan Woods of First Strike Records by Tim Harkey on "Starting your own label," along with the usual large selection of record, tape and zine reviews. This is definitely the zine to check out for anyone interested in the current state of the punk scene. Subscriptions are \$15/6 issues.

A.C.T. #2 & #3/both undated (c/o Steve Jones, 276 Sandowne Dr., Waterloo, Ontario N2K 2C2 Canada) is a 30 to 40-page political/art 'zine whose name is the acronym for Artists for Cultural Terrorism. Contains collages, reprints, rants, etc. Subscriptions are \$5/year. Sample: "pay what you want."

Green Synthesis #33/Mar.'90 (L.E.D., POB 1858, San Pedro, CA. 90733) is a 16-page quarterly officially associated

with the Green Committees of Correspondence. This issue includes "Improving the debates" by green guru Charlene Spretnak (4 pages largely devoted to more criticisms of the Left Green Network), a letter from David Haenke (who in an earlier issue invented the label that anarchists have participated in "genocide"), a report on the "European Greens Conference" by Mindy Lorenz (advocating electoralism), a report on the birth of the California Green Party, and a call to "Shut down Wall Street for Earth Day!" by Brian Tokar. Subscriptions are \$10/2 years (8 issues).

The New Catalyst #17/Spring '90 (POB 99, Lillooet, B.C. V0K 1V0 Canada) is now a free, 16-page "bioregional" tabloid, newly affiliated with New Society Publishers (the leftist/pacifist publishing house which grew out of the now-disbanded Movement for a New Society). The most interesting piece in this issue is on "The great debate: Social ecology and deep ecology" by Bill Weinberg, which gives an account of a recent "debate between Murray Bookchin and Dave Foreman in New York City."

Slingshot #34/Mar.'90 (700 Eshleman Hall, Berkeley, CA. 94720) is an energetic, 8-page monthly student paper for the

University California at Berkeley community. This issue features "Their military strategy: No panhandling or loitering" and "Their political strategy: The long range development plan." Send a contribution for a sample copy.

Alternative Press Index Vol.21, #4/Oct.-Dec.'89 & Vol.22, #1/Jan.-Mar.'90 (POB 33109, Baltimore, MD. 21218) is a 122-page, quarterly, library-style index to a wide range of alternative and radical periodicals, including anarchic publications like the *Fifth Estate*, *Kick It Over*, *Open Road*, *Our Generation*, and *Social Anarchism*, along with *Anarchy*. Subscriptions are \$30/year (4 issues) for individuals & movement groups.

The American Rationalist Vol.34, #6/Mar.-April, Vol.35, #1/May-June & #2/July-Aug.'90 (POB 994, St. Louis, MO. 63188) is a little 16-page magazine which bills itself as "The alternative to religious superstition." Issue #1 includes "Jesus of Nazareth: Myth or reality?" by Ronald Tanguay; #2 includes "Biology vs. creationism" by Harry Mongold. Subscriptions are \$6/year (6 issues).



From *A No Record Deal* (Pressure Drop Press, POB 460754, San Francisco, CA. 94146).

Feminist press review

Compiled by Mikell Zhan

ON OUR BACKS Vol.6, #5/May-June '90 (526 Castro Street, San Francisco, CA. 94114) is a 48 page, bimonthly, slick magazine that is subtitled "Entertainment for the Adventurous Lesbian." This issue is my first experience with *ON O.B.* and it's not what I expected. Heresay told me *ON OUR BACKS* is a hardcore porno magazine that derived its name to mock & ridicule *OFF OUR BACKS* because of their puritanical stance on pornography. Whether the later is true or not I'm not certain but as to the former I do not find *ON O.B.* to be hardcore. Visually it's turned eroticism. Overall, porn with style, sexy and fun. "Panties off" to photographers Jessica Brooke Tanzer and Honey Lee Cottrell for their creative and technical skills. Subscriptions are \$28/year (6 issues).

OFF OUR BACKS Vol.XX, #3/March, #5/May, #6/June & #7/July '90 (2423 18th Street NW, Washington, DC. 20009) continues its excellence as a lesbian-feminist newsjournal. Issue #3 features "Feminism in the barrios of Costa Rica" an OOB interview with Montserrat Sagot; other interviews include "Black women in Sudan" and "Fighting wife abuse in India." Interesting articles are "Feminism in Scandinavia" by Beth Weise, Amy Elman's "Swedish Politics," and "Chinese women face increased discrimination" by Mary Erbaugh. Issue #5 has an interesting report from the March '90 Aging Lesbian Conference held in Washington D.C. This issue's interviews include a discussion with Dama Vasquez Garate on "Central American Women: Battered in the USA," "Refugee from El Salvador" by Jill Bend, Commentaries on "Jewish Feminism & Identity Politics" by Esther Helfgott and Julia Penelope on "Women and Lesbian Only Spaces: Thought into

Action." Issue #6 focusses on "Homophobia in Sports" by Helen Lensky, Patricia Schwartz discusses "Lesbian Love in Limbo," accounts of the Feb.'90 "Radical Women's Conference" held in Santa Monica (CA), and local & international abortion news updates. Issue #7's lineup includes: "East Germany: Feminism today" by Louise Davidson, Kinesia May '90 on "Zimbabwe: opposing violence," a conference account honoring the barbecue at the "National Lesbian Conference" by Rosemary Curb, and the story of Nikki Craft—jailed May 23rd, 1990 for tearing up four copies of *Esquire* magazine. Each OOB issue includes book & music reviews, letters, "Chicken Lady," & "Dykes to watch out for" which are currently in comic strip format. Subscriptions are \$17/year (11 issues). OOB is also available in braille & tape.

THE WOMEN'S ALTERNATIVE TIMES (TWAT) Vol.1, #3/undated (POB 49245, Austin, TX. 78765) is a free, 20-page, bimonthly journal of local & international "opinion and information." Each issue has a page called "Bullshit, Bullshit," which is designed to attack individuals & organizations view points that are "sexist, racist, homophobic & otherwise oppressive." This issue's "Bullshit" focusses on the unlimited power structure of the Supreme Court System. TWAT says "Bullshit! The Supreme Court doesn't protect women's individual rights" (Roe vs. Wade) it "threatens our rights! Everytime we stand back & allow a court to mold our social policies for us, we weaken our democracy as a whole." Send an SASE for a sample copy.

THE BIG RED RAG Vol.3, #2/Fall '89 (c/o The Women's Center, Willard Straight Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY. 14853) is a free, 12 page tabloid and is published semestery. This feminist forum "opposes and hopes to bring to the fore instances of sexism, racism, classism, ableism, antisemitism, agelism, and heterosexism." Send a SASE for a sample copy.

If you publish a feminist periodical which you'd like to see reviewed here, please send it to: Mikell Zhan, c/o C.A.L., POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446.

Factsheet Five #35 (Gunderloy, 6 Arizona Ave., Rensselaer, NY. 12144-4502) remains 124 pages packed with hundreds of zine, software, book, poetry, pamphlet, comics, video, record and tape reviews. Issue #35 includes increasingly interesting columns—"Networking the nineties" by John Held, Jr. (this time on mail art & the "art strike") and "The fishing hole" by Joe Lane (on alternative press associations). If you haven't seen a copy of this "zine of crosscurrents and cross-pollination" yet, it's a must. Subscriptions are \$3 or 8 IRCs per issue up to five issues, \$16 or 40 IRCs/year (6 issues).

Sound Choice #14/Spring '90 (POB 1251, Ojai, CA. 93023) at 96 pages, is one of the best magazines to check out if you're interested in "a carefully organized multi-genre collection of hundreds of reviews of incredible music and audio art that you won't read about in glossy-covered corporate propaganda music magazines." As usual this issue includes lots of music news shorts, letters, and periodical & book reviews, although the ads are rather thick in places, too. There's an interesting discussion of the "Format wars"—including thoughts on the future of vinyl, cassettes, CDs and DAT. *Anarchy* also gets a long & emotional review in this issue; evidently we've touched a vibrant chord somewhere! Subscriptions are \$10/4 issues.

Utne Reader #39/May-June '90 (Box 1974, Marion, OH. 43305) still claims to reprint "The best of the alternative press," though it only covers the more establishment-oriented, unchallenging side of the "alternative press" in practice. In these issues there is more excitement about the advertising "rate base" reaching 200,000, than there seems to be concern for investigating the more creative or radical reaches of the alternative press. Issue #39 includes a couple pieces which minimize the central social/experiential aspects of what has been so successfully misnamed "mental illness" (typical defenses of the dominant mythology), a series of short articles about "Life on campus in the '90s" (featuring an example of *Psychology Today's* shallow reporting), and a collection of pieces on our "Roots: A restless nation searches for a place to call home." Subscriptions are \$18/year (6 issues).

Industrial Worker #1524/May & #1525/June '90 (3435 N. Sheffield Ave. Suite 202, Chicago, IL. 60657) is the 8-page newspaper of the Industrial Workers of the World—the vestigial remains of a once-powerful, radical union whose apogee preceded WWI. Issue #1524 is a "Women's Issue," featuring "Women and the IWW: A historical perspective" by Linda Butler, pieces on the struggle over abortion, a fairly long & interesting "Interview with a sex trade worker," along with an announcement "Earth First! renounces tree spiking." Issue #1525 includes news of the recent car-bombing of Earth First! activists in Oakland, and a story on "North American political prisoners." Subscriptions are \$10/year (12 issues).

New England Green Action Vol.2, #3-4/May '90 (POB 4567, Burlington, VT. 05406) is a nicely-produced, 20-page regional newsletter. This issue includes "Earth Day morning after" (on the Wall street action) by Debbie Bowen, "Burlington Greens call for moratorium on genetic engineering," and "Fetal rights or women's liberation?" by Sandy Baird, in addition to interesting stories on ecological politics in Italy and Montreal, and a hilarious description of the "consensual cretinism" of recent meetings of the Green Committees of Correspondence. Subscriptions are \$10/year (6 issues).

Gnosis #15/Spring & #16/Summer '90 (POB 14217, San Francisco, CA. 94114) is a fairly slick, 80 to 90-page journal of "the Western Inner Traditions" edited by Jay Kinney. Issue #15 focusses on "Ancient Civilizations," including articles such as "Listening to the ruins: Interpreting the Maya through the ages" by Peter Balin, Timothy O'Neill on "Atlantis," "The spirit of Egypt" by Michael Crisp, and William Eichman's "Çatal Hüyük: The temple city of prehistoric Anatolia." Issue #16 focusses on the banality of "Orthodoxy." Subscriptions are \$15.00/year (4 issues).

Can of Worms #57/Spring '90 (POB 1733, Colma, CA. 94014-0733) is an unusual, 128-page zine of photos & discussion. This issue focusses on reactions to an "Annihilate sex roles" survey done by *Maximum RocknRoll*, and also includes "Pete Atlas super-hero?" in "The way it isn't!" Send \$6.00 for a sample copy.

Current #3/"New decade" & #4/Mayday '90 (Big River EFL, POB 189, Pacific, MO. 63069) is an Earth First! paper aimed at those in the Mississippi River Valley region. Issue #3 is a 12-page zine, while issue #4 has grown to a 12-page tabloid with a cover story titled "B.R.E.F.!" exposes corporate Earth Day" by Orin Langelie, a report on the April Fools Day Rendezvous, a piece called "Wage work is abortion," accounts of the St. Louis anarchists' Mayday picnic and march (with chants like "WORK IS REALLY SILLY!"), and other eco-news. Recommended. Subscriptions are \$3/year (4 issues).

Green Egg Vol.XXII, #88/Oimeic '90 (C.A.W., POB 1542, Ukiah, CA. 95482) is the 40-page "official journal of the Church of All Worlds, a Neo-Pagan Earth Religion dedicated to the celebration of life...." Issue #88 features "From chaos to awareness: Life, the universe and the synxyn" by Lew Price, "UFO abductions as initiations" by Daniel Blair, an interview with P.E.I. Bonewits, and lots more. Subscriptions are \$13/year (4 issues).

OTHER SMALL PUBLICATIONS:

New Options #63/ #64/Jan.-Feb., #66/April & #67/May '90 (POB 19324, Washington, DC. 20036) continues with its 8-page newsletter format to present a Pollyanna synthesis of New Age, green, and "postliberal" perspectives. Issue #63 features "Alternatives to the 'global marketplace.'" Issue #64 includes an essay the editor claims took him two months to write, a superficial piece titled "The 1980s were better than we thought," which glibly announces the emergence of "the caring individual" as a new "archetype" in our culture! [Not to be overly hard on this type of bullshit, I suppose all those New Agers out there do seem to "care" pretty much about their VCRs, their crystals, and their enormous self-delusions!] Issue #66 proposes a new income tax system. Issue #67 argues that "We have got to start controlling our technology." Subscriptions are still an inflated \$25/year (11 issues).

The Southern Libertarian Messenger Vol. XVIII, #9, Jan., #10/Feb., #11/Mar., #12/April & Vol.XIX, #1/May '90 (Rt.10 Box 52A, Florence, SC. 29501) is a 6 to 16-page, photocopied, right-wing/ Christian "libertarian" publication made up largely of news & commentary clippings from other publications. Subscriptions are \$6/year (12 issues).

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Alternative media review

Anarchist press review

Compiled by Lev Chernyi

KICK IT OVER #25/Winter '90 (POB 5811, Station A, Toronto, Canada M5W 1P2) is a major anarchist/feminist/ecological journal, though its collective is having rough times these days and is unsure how long publication will continue. This 24-page issue includes a short-short story by Gail Schilke titled "Resident Alien," "A short autobiography" by Richard Ellington, "Witness for peace-Part 2" (consisting of letters from Carolyn Mow in El Salvador), John Englehart's overview of small group "Process," Jennifer Sanders "Is fashion fascism?," along with the second part of April Carter's academically pacifistic essay "Anarchism & violence." Subscriptions are \$7.50/4 issues.

THE FUTURE GENERATION #1/April '90 (78 28th St., S.F., CA. 94110) is an interesting, photocopied, 76-page first effort at creating a network for "alternative parents." This issue focusses on a theme of the "Physical," with an excerpt from Barbara Rothman's book *Recreating Motherhood*, an untitled essay on the "physicalness" of children by China, excerpts from *When Your Child Drives You Crazy* by Eda Leshan, a reprint of Heathcote Williams' "The foreskin file" (a critique of circumcision) from *CoEvolution Quarterly*, excerpts from Suzanne Arms' book *Immaculate Deception* (on the many dangers of institutional childbirth), as well as collages, poems and comments by the editor. "The child must be mutilated to fit this current society or this current society must be overturned to allow children to fulfill themselves." Send \$1.00 for a sample copy.

LOVE AND RAGE/AMOR Y RABIA #1/April, #2/May & #3/June '90 (Box 3, Prince St. Station, New York, NY. 10012) is a new & controversial 16-page anarchist newsmagazine, which in many ways looks and feels similar to *The Torch/La Antorcha*, the old newspaper of the (now-dissolved) Revolutionary Socialist League. This is an ambitious project emphasizing militant activism on a variety of fronts and a "smorgasbord leftist" sensitivity to "minorities." Each issue contains both English and Spanish-language sections, along with special sections on Eastern Europe ("On Gogol Boulevard") & prisoner support ("Anarchist Black Cross"). Issue #2 includes "Berkeley cops riot at student squat" by J. Vermont & Nissa, "Miner threat!" by Mike Kolhoff (on the Pittston strike), "Squatters resist C.H.A. lockdown" by Kedzie Throop (on the Chicago Housing Authority's war against its tenants), & "Poll tax revolt rocks Britain" by Michael Donnelly. Issue #3 features "Barricades on Broadway" by Paul O'Bannon (on the Earth Day Wall Street action), & "Chippewa fight for spearfishing rights" by Kate Ceridwen, along with a special 8-page "On Gogol Boulevard" insert (including an interesting piece titled "Was the CIA behind the Eastern European purge trials?"). Subscriptions are \$7.00/year (12 issues).

FIFTH ESTATE #334/Summer '90 (POB 02548, Detroit, MI. 48202) is an essential 32-page tabloid, advocating an anarchic primitivist perspective. This issue includes a special center section (produced as a separate paper in itself for Earth Day distribution) including pieces titled "Earth Day? We want a festival of the oppressed" by Lewis Cannon, "Recycling & liberal reform" by Bert Wirkes and a reprint of Rudolf Bahro's "Who can stop the apocalypse." Also included in this issue is a story on the car-bombing of Earth First! organizers, "An appreciation" of Emma Goldman by David Porter, stories on the "FBI war on the Black Panthers," a book review of Fredy Perlman's *The Strait* by Allan Foster, and a revealing exchange (between Alice Wexler, David Porter & the FE) over "Emma Goldman and the Russian Revolution," along with other pieces of interest. Highly recommended. Subscriptions are still a cheap \$5/year (4 issues), though single issues have increased to \$1.50.

SOCIAL ANARCHISM #15/1990 (2743 Maryland Ave., Baltimore, MD. 21218) is a neatly produced, 94-page "Journal of Practice and Theory." This issue starts off with a superficial (anarcho-liberal) survey of "Hard questions for citizen radicals" by David Bouchier. It continues with an at times perceptive piece by Kingsley Widmer titled "Natural anarchism: Edward Abbey, and gang," John Moore's disappointing essay "Toward a cultural ecology of anarchy" (reviewed as part of his booklet *Anarchy and Ecstasy* in *Anarchy* #22), a peculiar piece by Thomas Martin titled "Society its own supervisor: Galt's democratic theory," along with a short piece on the death of Esther Dolgoff and a number of book reviews. Subscriptions are \$10/2 years (4 issues).

INSURRECTION #6/Sept.'89 (Elephant Editions, BM Elephant, London, WC1N 3XX) is an interesting 12-page tabloid aligned with the Italian group (including the well known comrade, Alfredo Bonanno) which puts out *Anarchismo and ProvoAzione*. This issue features many accounts of radical actions, including "The pylons of death come crumbling down," "Anarchists against apartheid" (on last year's sacking of the South African consulate in Copenhagen by 200 anarchists), "Ecological luddism: The Montedison explodes," "Germinating resistance against Shell's biotechnology," "ALF: Striking the laboratories of power," "Schools in flames," and "One less sweatshop." Also included are pieces on "Anarchists and action" by Alfredo Bonanno, and "A democratic frame up" (on the trumped-up charges against Alfredo Bonanno and Pipo Stasi after their arrest last year for a jeweller's robbery) Also included with this issue was a 48-page, magazine-sized supplement titled *In*

Bergamo: Concerning an attempted robbery and a Democratic frame-up—a more detailed account of the Bonanno & Stasi case from several perspectives. Single copies of the paper are 50 pence, but send at least three dollars for this issue to cover overseas postage & the supplement.

ALSO RECEIVED:

Green Anarchist #23/Spring '90 (Box H, 34 Cowley Rd., Oxford OX4 1HZ, U.K.) is a lively 24-page magazine dedicated to creating a society of "Autonomous, self-sufficient villages, bringing regression of technology: no industry, no pollution, no hunger, no bomb." It's cover motto is "The enemies of the people are those who know what people need." Issue #23 features a discussion of "Anarchy and culture" and an anti-religious poster/centerfold. Subscriptions are £4.50/10 issues.

Against Sleep and Nightmare #2/undated (POB 3305, Oakland, CA. 94609) is a fairly sophisticated—yet at times pretentious—attempt at extending a situationist critique, while remaining within the Situationist International's theoretical framework of Marxist council communism. It's an impressive 30-page effort for a one-person project, including pieces on "Hatred and violence," "The prospects for revolution," "The spectacle's critique of the spectacle," "Good drug/bad drug," "The project of supersession," "The reconstitution of the left" (which includes an interesting, if overly generalizing, critique of contemporary anarchism), and "The crisis of capital." None of the articles is attributed to any author. Recommended as better-than-the-average for this type of publication. Subscriptions are \$8.00/4 issues.



Here and Now #10/1990 (c/o Transmission Gallery, 28 King St., Glasgow G1 5QP, Scotland) is a glossy, 32-page magazine featuring Bedford Fenwick's well-done "The institutionalisation of the Community," Mike Peters & Steve Bushell's "Euromania" (interesting analysis of the push towards European unity), Arjen Mulder & Geert Lovink's "The politics of panic: the Kedichem case" (which presents an analysis of a "violent" anti-fascist demo), C.W. & Ali Hussein on the Rushdie affair & Muslim fundamentalism, as well as a piece titled "Full-time, part-time, paid, unpaid" by Martine Christie. This issue also includes a 16-page supplement titled "Art(Anti-Art)" with various reviews along with critical discussion of the "art strike." Recommended Subscriptions are £3.00/3 issues (checks made to G.P.P.).

Profane Existence #3/April-May & #4/June-July '90 (POB 8722, Mpls, MN. 55408) is an impressive 32 to 40-page anarchist fanzine with lots of letters, columns & news, though much of it's in awfully small print. Issue #3 includes "Anarchists in the Russian Revolution" by Felix, "Civil war, death squads and U.S. dollars—news on the situation in El Salvador compiled by Troll, & "Take back your life: A woman's guide to alternative and natural health care" by Alicia non Grata. Issue #4 includes "Crime in an anarchist society," a piece on "Pornography, censorship & anarchy" (critical of the anti-porn, anti-S&M stances of RABLI), lots of band interviews, and a spread on the history of anarcho-syndicalism—also by Felix. Both issues include thoroughly unconvincing apologies for Israeli nationalism by Felix (one in response to a critical letter from Chris Day) & some confused thinking on the "overpopulation problem." Subscriptions are \$9/year (6 issues).

Black Eye #8/undated (339 Lafayette, Suite 2, New York, NY. 10012) is a small-sized, irregularly produced, 44-page zine—usually featuring an interesting mix of articles in unfortunately small print. This issue includes "The end of prehistory" by Alex Trotter, and "Documents from Tiananmen Square." Subscriptions are \$6.00/4 issues.

The Shadow #11/May '90 (POB 20298, New York, NY. 10009) is an energetic 24-page tabloid. Issue #11 includes coverage of the Mayday action in Tompkins Square titled "Pigs riot." Definitely worth checking out if you're interested in what's happening with the Lower East Side in New York. Subscriptions are \$10/year (? issues).

Endless Struggle #12/Spring-Summer '90 (POB 69601 Stn.K, Vancouver BC. V5K 4W7, Canada) is a nicely-produced and very readable 28-page zine—unfortunately, this is the final issue. This issue includes "Defining the autonomous struggle," "@ feminist movement?," an interview with "The Gitsan-Wet Suwet'en," "Against imperialism: International solidarity and resistance" (in favor of supporting oxymoronic "national liberation struggles"), "The right to life isn't begged for: It is taken!" (on the case of Bonanno & Stasi in Italy), and "Let's stop the congress!!! West Berlin autonomous groups' Days of Action against the IMF & World Bank, 1988" (some interesting details amongst this overblown rhetoric). Sample copies are \$1.50.

Bayou La Rose #31/undated (302 N. J St., Apt.#3, Tacoma, WA. 98403) is an irregularly produced, 32-page tabloid now in its 11th year of publication. This issue includes "The forests: An international view" by Arthur Miller, "Nigerian women need our help" by Barb Hansen, an article on the history of "Mujeres Libres" (an anarchist women's group organized in Spain 52 years ago), and an important article on "Understanding the heat" by Arthur Miller. Subscriptions are \$7.50/4 issues.

(In-sit) #3/Jan.'90 (POB 17406, Arlington, VA. 22216) is a well-produced, 16-page newsletter which includes short pieces of news commentary, a short-short story by A.A. Attanasio titled "Sherlock Holmes and Basho," and a number of short book reviews. Send \$1.00 for a sample copy.

Libertarian Labor Review #8/Winter '89-90 (Box 2824, Champaign, IL. 61825) is a 42-page magazine of "Anarcho-syndicalist Ideas and Discussion." This issue leads off with a vehement condemnation of last year's Berkeley Day of Action after the Without Borders conference, and a few obituaries for Esther Dolgoff, Minnie Corder & José Peirats Valls. Also featured are "Pittston: The limits of business unionism" by Jeff Stein, "Anarcho-syndicalist tendencies in Russian labor" by Sam Dolgoff, as well as "Anarcho-syndicalism reborn in Soviet Union" by Mike Hargis, and an interview with Noam Chomsky. Subscriptions are \$5.00/year (2 issues).

Instead of @ Magazine #48/Spring '90 (POB 433, Williamlantic, CT. 06226) is a lively little 48-page journal. This issue features Mike Gunderloy on "Closing the gaps: Challenges for the anarchist movement," "Cowardice" by Michael Ziesing, Hakim Bey's "The International Horizontalist Association: Or, a prolegomena to anarcho-armchairism," "A tardy review of The Last Temptation of Christ" by P.T. Young, and "The revolution was televised" by Terry Epton. Worth checking out. Subscriptions are \$6.50/4 issues.

Ideas & Action #13/undated (POB 40400, San Francisco, CA. 94140) is the irregular 16-page tabloid organ of the Workers Solidarity Alliance, a small, U.S. anarcho-syndicalist grouping affiliated with the International Workers Association (I.W.A./A.I.T.). This issue features articles like "White workers & racism" by Neil Farber, "Ecology & anarcho-syndicalism" by Bill Meyers, "I hate work! Work, anti-work and workers control" (a simplistic critique of the anti-work position) by Mike Kolhoff, and Tom Wetzel's articles—"Los Angeles derailed: Why the system degrades public transit" and "On the crisis in the 'Communist bloc.'" Subscriptions are \$7.50/4 issues.

Baby Fish Lost Its Momma #3/undated (POB 11589, Detroit, MI.) is a huge (78-page) compendium of Cass Corridor poetry, collage, reviews, fiction, commentary, etc. Full of short pieces like Sunfrog's "Oh, no. In fact, I'm going to destroy it," interspersed with reprints like our own old anti-car poster ("Declare war: No more cars! Body count rising"), there's enough in this zine to keep anyone busy for hours. Send a couple dollars contribution for a sample copy.

OTHER SMALL PERIODICALS RECEIVED:

CounterInformation #26/Feb.-April & #27/June-Aug.'90 (Pigeonhole Cl, c/o 11 Forth St., Edinburgh EH1, Scotland) is a 4-page newsheet. These issues include more coverage of the continuing mass poll-tax nonpayment in Scotland and Britain in articles entitled "A year of non payment!" & "Do the right thing! (resist)," along with a piece on the situation in Eastern Europe titled "Back to the future" and other news. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

Ecomedia Bulletin #69/Jan. 30 through #76/May 21,'90 (POB 915, Stn. F, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2N9, Canada) is a 4-page fortnightly anarchist news bulletin. These issues include news of the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility hunger strike against beatings, harassment & torture, the Innu struggle at Nitassinan and the Polytechnic occupation in Athens, as well as news of recent confrontations with the native spear-fishers in Wisconsin, the GRAPO hunger strike, resistance to the British poll tax implementation and the current situations in Argentina and Jamaica. Subscriptions are \$15/year (26 issues).

The Monthly Meander Vol.2, #9/Jan. & #10/Mar. '90 (Mike Gunderloy, 6 Arizona Ave., Rensselaer, NY. 12144-4052) is a 3 to 4-page "Newsletter of evolutionary anarchists" consisting of letters from contributors. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

Echomedia April '90 (BM Box 7014, London WC1N 3XX, England) is a little 2-sided broadsheet with international radical & anarchist news. Send a donation for a sample copy.

The Thought Vol.10, #2/Feb., #3/Mar., #4/April & #5/May '90 (POB 3092, Orange, CA. 92665) is a 22-page, photocopied, monthly publication of the Philosophers Guild. Issue #3 includes "The concept of democracy" by Peter Franke along with a reply from the editor (Ron Tobin), and a piece entitled "In praise of slavery" by Allen Thornton. Issue #4 includes the beginning of a serialized vampire story titled "Sojourn to the Bay" (unattributed). Issue #5 includes "A diet of worms" by Ben Price (on the current anti-illegal-drug hysteria). Subscriptions are \$10/year (12 issues).

Anarchist Labor Bulletin #17/Feb., #18/undated (POB 210095, San Francisco, CA. 94121-0095) is the 8-page publication of the Anarchist Labor Network "formed at the 1989 Anarchist Conference in San Francisco." Issue #17 includes an interesting interview with the general secretary of the CNT-AIT. Issue #18 issue includes a piece on "Workplace organizing: Collective bargaining." Subscriptions are \$10/12 issues.

Dragonfly Vol.3, #5 (3358 20th St., S.F., CA. 94110) is a visually fascinating, 10-page photocopied zine. This issue includes collages by Freddie Baer and Johann Humyn Being, along with interesting rants by Chris Brown. A piece on "Word salad" is especially straightforward and on the mark. Highly recommended. Send an SASE for a sample copy.

Effigy #2/April '90 (1803 Mission #172, Santa Cruz, CA. 95060) is an interesting 20-page, photocopied newsletter of Ecomedia Santa Cruz. This issue includes many photoreductions of newspaper articles on Earth First!, ecology actions and animal rights. Of especial interest are a couple of loose sheets sent along with this issue containing news articles on the New York and Pacific Stock Exchange actions during the Earth Day spectacle, and the sabotage of two P.G.&E. power poles by the Earth Night Action Group in Santa Cruz County (knocking out power to most of the area). Send a 45¢ SASE for a copy.

Little Free Press #74/April, #75/undated & #76/June '90 (Rt.1, Box 102, Cushing, MN. 56443) is a 2 to 4-page description of Ernest Mann's own individual solutions to living as far outside the money economy as he can. His new, 320-page Little Free Press anthology titled *I Was Robot* is now available for \$7.95 postpaid. Send an SASE for a copy of his newsletter.

Rise Above #3 (POB 116, Troy, IL. 62294) is a 14-page, photocopied zine featuring short pieces and collages. Send \$1.00 or trade.

Echomedia Vancouver Bulletin unnumbered/May '90 (69601 Stn.K, Vancouver, B.C. V5K 4W7 Canada) is now an irregular 3-page newsletter. Send an SASE for a sample.

Daily Impulse #22/Feb., #23/March & #24/April '90 (POB 90312, San Diego, CA. 92109) is a large single-sheet broadside which has now ceased publication. Send \$5.00 for the last year's issues.

FreeZine Vol.2, #2/Fall '89 & #3/April '90 (POB 1465, Troy, NY. 12180) is a nicely-produced 12 to 16-page magazine. Issue #3 includes worthwhile pieces by David Wiecek & Ed D'Angelo. The publication is free, but send a contribution for postage.

The State Adversary #14/April '90 (POB 78-104, Grey Lynn, Auckland, Aotearoa/New Zealand) is a 12-page animal rights/anarchist newsletter. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

Behind the Walls unnumbered/Nov.'89 (5 Star Press, POB 4167, Halfmoon, NY. 12065) is the small, 20-page zine of PANAL (Prisoners' Anarchist Network At Large). Subscriptions are \$10/year (4 issues?); \$5/year for prisoners.

Bad Attitude #1/Feb., #2/Mar., #3/April & #4/May '89 (POB 11589, Detroit, MI. 48211) is a 4-page street sheet. These issues are from last year, so I don't know if it's still published. Send an SASE to them for a sample copy.

The Alarm #1/Spring '90 (1340 W. Irving Park Rd. #122, Chicago, IL. 60613) is a new 12-page, left-anarchist tabloid which claims to be "perhaps the

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Anarchy in Eastern Europe!

By Stefan Wray

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Introduction.

Everyone by now knows about Eastern Europe, that many years of Stalinist rule have come to an end and that this is the most important period in Europe since the end of the Second World War. However, there are other happenings in the East that most people don't know, because these events are occurring well beneath the surface and remain unreported by the media.

The Press reports on the spectacles, the fall of the Berlin Wall and subsequent talks of German reunification, demonstrations in Prague, the execution of Ceausescu, riots in Azerbaijan, and the largest protests in Moscow since 1917. They gloat over the death of Communism and herald in a new era of freedom and democracy. There is much news about political pluralism and free market economies. The impression given is that all of Eastern Europe, having thrown off its yoke, is only looking to the West as the perfect political and economic model. In many respects this is true. In Budapest, for example, there is an evident adoration for the western culture that has already started to spread throughout the populace. However, far from the eyes of television cameras, and perhaps far from the thoughts of many East Europeans are those who, while rejecting the Communist State and all its manifestations, have an equally critical view towards western capitalist states and in no way want to see one system of corruption, social injustice, and exploitation replaced by another. Those who see a future in neither East nor West are people never mentioned by the western media and for the most part they remain unknown.

During the past year, in almost every Eastern European country, there has been a resurgence of anarchism. In Poland and the Soviet Union, there are anarchist federations with affiliated groups in numerous cities. In Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Yugoslavia, there are anarchist groups or networks of individuals. Only Albania and Romania are countries where there is no known activity.

As a result of greater political tolerance, anarchists in the East have been able to emerge from years of underground activity and are now openly publishing their ideas, organizing public forums and meetings, participating in demonstrations, and creating local and national networks of groups and individuals.

To facilitate the development of regional communication and contacts, and for anarchists from the East and West to meet to have a better understanding of each other, there was a meeting in Trieste this Spring, attended by people from most of the Eastern European countries, from Western Europe and North America.

This article presents a sketch of the situation in each country, the plans for the Trieste meeting, the role of western anarchists, and new potential for international networking and cooperation in the anarchist community. The information is based on personal experience in Hungary and Yugoslavia, conversations with a Polish man, articles in British anarchist papers and *Umanita Nova* (Italy), and correspondence from the Soviet Union. By no means is it complete; it is meant to serve as an introduction.

I am a North American, most recently from California, and have been in Europe for more than one year. Currently, I am in Trieste working and helping to organize this upcoming meeting [Note: this essay was written in March, 1990]. I am trying to obtain the necessary visas to go to the Soviet Union and Poland. You can expect further reports about the Trieste meeting, about the anarchist meeting in Kharkov (Ukraine) on May 1 & 2, and other news that I learn.

East European Anarchism

An obviously clear distinction between anarchism in Eastern Europe and anarchism in the West is the development of eastern anarchism within the framework of disintegrating Communist states. Existing in post-Communist society already is and will continue to be what the emerging anarchist movements have in common. The nature of this society at the moment is turbulent, in the process of transformation, but there are signs indicating the possible direction and what the future may be like.

The most evident or superficial changes will of course be political and economic. In every Eastern country there is a move away from a one party system to a multiparty system. There are new laws allowing for greater freedom of speech, of the press, of movement. All these political changes indicate a move towards allowing for a diversity of thought and action. In the economic sphere, in all cases there is now a transformation from state capitalism to western style economic institutions. Economic restructuring is necessary but if the East only looks to the West as a model and a source of financial assistance it is likely that it will become another cheap labor force for western multinationals.

Changes in the political institutions, the creation of "democracy," the formation of a

variety of new parties, and subsequent elections is the new ethos in the East. While in the West, we have been subjects of this form of democracy for years and know very well that whether you vote or not the system of power and authority remains intact, for people in the East they have yet to experience the disillusionment with this. Anarchists may have a difficult time convincing people to not vote who have never had the chance to make a real choice. In general, anarchists will have a hard road ahead, because many people in the East right now see things in black and white, either communism or capitalism.

For decades the numerous propaganda bureaus have bombarded the population with horror stories of the evils of western society; people who continue to warn about the dangers of uncritically falling into the hands of western influence are perhaps viewed with a certain amount of suspicion.

Apart from the internal structural changes that will effect the evolution of post-Communist society in the East, there is the influence of the West and in particular of western corporations and financial institutions. News of this is not in the headlines, but on the back pages and business section. In a recent issue of the *New York Times*, (21.1.90) it was reported that Rupert Murdoch bought 50% of two independent Hungarian newspapers and that this was the first significant investment in Eastern Europe's emerging free press. "The whole region of Eastern Europe is the most exciting part of the world today," said Murdoch, "and we see Hungary as the very center of it." In November, General Electric purchased the Tuusram light bulb factory in Hungary. In Budapest there is a McDonalds (as in Moscow), an Adidas shop, a new office of the American Chamber of Commerce. On the highway leading into the city are billboards advertising Shell and Coca Cola. *Playboy* magazine is now sold at kiosks in the Hungarian language edition.

In January, the Japanese were reportedly considering loaning between 1.5 and 1.9 billion dollars to Hungary and Poland on condition that they restructure their economies so that it becomes profitable for western companies to operate there. Daihatsu has discussed the possibility of opening an auto factory in Poland and Suzuki has done the same in Hungary.

In today's *International Herald Tribune* (26.2.90), there is an article which says that Bulgaria, with a 10 billion dollar foreign debt and widespread food shortages, has applied for membership in the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia are already members and Czechoslovakia has also applied.

In East Germany, the Grand Hotel, where many of the business deals have been taking place, is referred to as "Sellout Central." "Here a typically international group debates the future of business in the East German pharmaceutical industry. Italian, Swiss, West German, and East German, they argue over how quickly to impose western ways on the new market of 16

million consumers who will, sometime this Spring, begin spending billions of West German marks on western products they have only ogled on the television." (IHT. 24.2.90)

These are only some examples of the encroachment of western multinationals in Eastern Europe. Yet they offer an indication of what lies ahead. Are they involved because they want to help the growth of "democracy" in the East? Certainly not. They see two opportunities, the creation of a new market place to sell their products and a new and vulnerable labor force to exploit. Perhaps more than the doctrine of perestroika, the multinationals will shape the future of the East.

One year ago, Martyn Lowe wrote in *Freedom*, maybe one of the first warnings of this encroachment and said, "While governments east and west talk about increasing trade between their countries, and people applaud the peace dialogues which reduce the danger of annihilation, another danger is being overlooked. This is the danger of yet more countries opening themselves to exploitation by the multinationals, and the exploitative imposition of multinational culture. It may seem strange to contemplate, but there might come a time, and not so far into the future, when we western radicals have to warn the Communist world about the dangers of multinational exploitation. Think what fun might result—animal liberationists from the UK picketing McDonalds in Moscow, Shell station pickets in Hungary, etc. A farfetched idea, perhaps, but it may be on the cards." (*Freedom*. 2.89)

Much more could be said about this emerging post-Communist society, but hopefully this gives a brief idea of the environment in which anarchists in the East now find themselves. In a sense, they are growing out of a vacuum, now discovering themselves and rediscovering their history. They have many problems for organizing due to being new and inexperienced and due to a generally poor infrastructure which limits their access to useful tools like printers and paper. Yet their resurgence in the past year is definitely dramatic and promising. To use an old journalistic cliché, "it remains to be seen" how they will evolve, and what kind of influence they will have on the overall society. With the same diligence and concerted effort that the multinationals and western political leaders have shown, western anarchists need to be assisting these new anarchist groups in the East in whatever way it is possible.

Hungary

At the first meeting of Autonómia that I attended, a woman from the Greens in West Germany was talking about sexism within alternative movements and, oddly enough, a man from North Carolina was describing Rainbow Gatherings. It was an interesting first impression, quite different than what I had imagined a Hungarian "anarcho-syndicalist" group to be. I had pictured a smoke filled room full of workers talking about self-management. It

was a smoke filled room but looked more like '68. So much for preconceptions.

Several years ago, a young Hungarian man who had been living in West Germany and had been exposed to anarchist ideas returned to his home country. He started a series of lectures and seminars at the University in Budapest and generated a small nucleus of people who were to become the initial core of Autonomía. In May of 1988, it became possible for opposition groups to be legally active. At this time, an organization called Fidesz was created. At the beginning, their main platform was the promotion of democracy and pluralism in Hungary. They attracted many different people interested in fundamental social change, including anarchists. However, as the summer progressed, it became clearer that Fidesz had an interest in western style parliamentary democracy and were in favor of modeling a capitalist "free" market economy. The anarchists decided that it was time for them to break away and form their own group, which they did on November 18, 1988, and wrote the following declaration.

"Autonomy in our interpretation is not only the final social aim, but also the free, responsible, morally guided behavior of self-conscious people. The aim is a society without rulers, without hierarchy, without authoritarianism; a society based on autonomy, self-governing communities functioning in a decentralized federation. Mutual aid, nonviolence, tolerance, and rejection of hierarchy should be the principles of the self-governing society. All economic entities should be the common property of those working there, and all these should be run in accordance with the principles of workers self-government. The economy should be subordinate to humanitarian and ecological goals.

"Direct democracy should work in all policy. Groups of people or communities should form their councils working on the principle of direct democracy and imperative mandate, that is that the members should only represent the decisions made by the voters.

"No more oppression! No more exploitation! No more discrimination for political, national, racist, religious, sexual or any other reasons! No more patriarchal men's rule! All women, children, and elderly people should enjoy total emancipation!"

Last Spring Autonomía participated in a demonstration of opposition forces with more than 100,000 people. It was their first public appearance and they carried a big anarchist flag and banner. On May 1, Autonomía joined an alternative demonstration to the officially sanctioned workers demo along with other newly formed independent trade unions. On August 13, in conjunction with similar manifestations in other countries, Autonomía initiated a street theater action against the Berlin Wall and all state boundaries, in which several East German tourists joined. In September, they published the first issue of their paper.

Although printed on poor quality paper, hand bound, and with no graphics except the cover and back page, it is a significant achievement. It is the first anarchist paper to be produced in Hungary since the turn of the century when a periodical entitled Allam Nélkül ("Without State"), was published for several years. It is 34 pages containing original articles discussing Autonomía, the current political situation, explanation of the word "anarchy," transition to neostalinist capitalism, as well as translated excerpts of Malatesta and Bakunin, along with an interview with a British feminist and a story by a Polish worker from Gdansk. Included also is something about the anarchist punk band Trottell.

In November, when I visited, they said their projects then were gathering materials for a library and translating Colin Ward's book, "Anarchy in Action." They receive a considerable amount of western anarchist journals, quite a bit from England. In a recent phone call I learned that they had been working more with a group of homeless activists. In November, they spoke about plans to maybe squat a building for a social center with other youths in the Spring.



Autonomía's street theatre in Hungary.

Autonomía meets every Wednesday night and between 20 and 30 people are normally in attendance. The meetings function essentially as a sort of seminar that one might find at the University. Many of them are students or young people in their 20s. The meetings are informal. Some say too informal.

Of course they are not without organizational problems, many of which can be attributed to general infrastructure problems found in Hungary and much of the East. For example, out of a population of 2 million, only 10% have private telephones. Many of the people in the group don't have phones as well. So it is difficult to have this sort of an organizing tool, something which in the West we take for granted. Another example: a manual typewriter costs 6,000 Florints. The average monthly salary is about 6,000 Ft. Manual typewriters are considered luxury items. Personal computers? I did have the chance to use someone's personal computer. It was a true home computer, built in the home. The room was full of used and salvaged computer components. The scene was something like a bizarre film from the '50s about mad scientists. Space is also a problem. Although Autonomía has access to a meeting place, it would be a great hardship and expense to find something for an office or more permanent center. There is a general housing problem. Most young people still live with their parents.

An organizational problem unrelated to infrastructure is the lack of experience and the lack of good models for working together in a non-hierarchical way. In fact, there is an anti-organization tendency (also in Poland), which views any attempts at structure or order as being bureaucratic. This is due to living for years under an extremely over-organized State bureaucracy and is a reaction to this. No one wants to be a leader and being assertive is misinterpreted as being a leader. For this reason, they have big trouble starting their meeting. This was a complaint of several people. Although there is a strong feminist influence, relative

to other eastern anarchists, and the group is about half women and half men, feminist group process as is known by some anarchists in the West is not practiced nor understood.

At the second meeting which I attended, I presented some general information about the anarchist community in North America and mentioned some specific anarchist projects and groups I know. In addition, I told about what I knew of anarchist activities in other parts of Europe, referring to the Europe Against the Current festival in Amsterdam. I was asked to describe how I have experienced meetings in the United States, to speak on process, form, etc. They were most interested in this. At the conclusion, I asked what sort of help anarchists in the West could offer. The immediate and obvious answer was financial. Some people in Wien have opened a bank account for them so that others can donate western currency.

A homeless man, affiliated with a group called Szeta, which has been working with poor and homeless people for 10 years, told of some manifestations. In Budapest, where there are about 40,000 homeless, the south train station which is a place for people to sleep had closed the doors to them. Some people were noticeably uncomfortable with the presence of this man at the meeting. I detected a real class difference.

The meeting ended not because we had finished, but because the room was promptly and unfortunately closed at 10:00 every time. My general impression is that they have a long road ahead of them if they are to become an effective force in the shaping of a new Hungarian society. Even they admit that they are emerging out of a vacuum, with little or no history and experience to support them. They are very new and still struggling with their identity, their aims, and defining what concrete work and projects they want to do.

It should be noted that outside of Autonomía there are things happening of interest to anarchists. One example is the creation of workers councils in some factories. A good case is the Herendi porcelain factory which

had been on the verge of bankruptcy until the workers decided to buy the factory together and manage it themselves. It is now one of the more profitable enterprises.

While in Budapest I thought that it had good potential for becoming a center of East-West networking. It is central in Europe. It is economically accessible for those traveling from other parts of Eastern Europe. And it is perhaps one of the most open Eastern countries at the moment. Future gatherings of East and West anarchists should definitely be in the East, due to the trouble with visas and money the easterners have in coming to the West. Budapest or somewhere in Hungary is a good location for such an event.

Yugoslavia

The situation in Yugoslavia is quite different than in Hungary, both in terms of the general political/economic/cultural environment and in terms of the anarchist movement, if one can indeed call it a movement. In *Anarchy* #23, Will Firth, an Australian who had lived in Zagreb, had an article entitled, "Yugoslavia: A weak Link in the Anarchist Chain." He described Yugoslavia as a "rudimentary" country and said that none of the dramatic changes like those taking place in other eastern countries are happening there. At first impression, this is true, especially concerning anarchists. If one judges the extent or depth of anarchism solely on the basis of whether or not a group exists or how large the group is then it may be that Yugoslavia is a weak link. I shared this idea until I began to understand more about the nature of anarchism in this country. Now I believe, that even though no actual anarchist groups exist, the influence of anarchist ideas, the understanding of anarchism is greater than in Hungary or maybe other eastern countries.

In Yugoslavia, there is a loose network of anarchists, primarily in Zagreb, Ljubljana, and Beograd. Many of them are intellectual workers, sociologists, journalists and professors. Much of their work involves writing and publishing articles about anarchism in various reviews and journals. I stayed for several weeks in Zagreb with a woman who has been involved with anarchism for about 15 years. She said that it could take 100 pages to describe all the different works, books and articles, that have been written concerning anarchism. This is quite different than Hungary or Poland where very little has been translated into their languages. An example is a recent interview with Murray Bookchin. It will be published in a magazine called *Start*. This is a popular weekly that can be found in almost every kiosk in the entire country. This same woman several years ago taught in the public schools. The course was on "Marxism," but she used the class as an opportunity to teach young people about anarchism. She was critical of Will Firth's article, said that he wasn't seeing the reality of anarchism in Yugoslavia. She contends that in other countries such as Italy anarchists are "ghettoized" and that in her country the ideas are more widespread.

Poland

Recently, I had the opportunity to speak with a young man from Poland who lives in France but makes frequent journeys to his homeland as well as to Czechoslovakia and East Germany. He acts as a representative of the Polish Anarchist Federation in the west. PAF was constituted last summer. It is a federation of anarchist groups existing in more than 20 cities and individuals in about 50 places. According to Marcin, the majority of anarchists in Poland now are very young, a new generation, post-Solidarnosc. As opposed to Hungary or Yugoslavia, there is a greater emphasis on street actions than on more "intellectual" endeavors. However, there are several publications being produced including *A Capella*

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Anarchy in Eastern Europe!

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("Circle A") in Gdansk and Katatonia put out by a broad-based anarchist group in Warsaw affiliated with the Federation of Fighting Youth (FMW).

Anarchist groups have existed since the early days of Solidarnosc and their situation is perhaps the strongest in the East and most well known in the West. First there was Ruch Społeczeństwa Alternatywnego ("Movement for an Alternative Society") which no longer is in its past form. Emerging from RSA was Wolność i Pokój ("Freedom and Peace"), a group involved with anti-militarism, anti-nuclear, ecology, actions against state borders and other issues. Also, there was Międzynarodówka Anarchistyczna ("Anarchist Inter Cities") that has essentially become the Polish Anarchist Federation (PAF). The first attempt at a national meeting of anarchists was a conference in Gdansk in the Fall of 1988, however the meeting was soon broken up by the police. It wasn't possible for them to meet relatively undisturbed until after the change in government one year ago, hence the emergence of the PAF last Summer.

Much has been written in the anarchist press in the West about Poland, so I won't repeat it here. But I will relay some interesting points that Marcin told me, especially related to the role of western anarchists. He stresses the importance of understanding the economic crisis and how this affects the ability of anarchists to organize. "Spiraling inflation of several thousand percent annually has led to near destruction of the currency, bare shelves, a thriving black market and smuggling of consumer goods." (NYT. 1.21-.90)

Simple things which we take for granted such as postage stamps, paper for printing, the freedom to travel, or using the telephone, present great difficulties to people in Poland. Anarchists there must steal the paper that they use for their publications. They must ride the trains without paying or hitchhike. Marcin said that compared to Poland, the Hungarian phone system is excellent. Sometimes it is impossible to call your neighbor, because of faulty lines which have been unrepaired for years. The post, if you can afford stamps, is very unreliable and often letters do not reach their destination. The infrastructure is in shambles.

With the shift from state capitalism to a "free" market and the consequent elimination of state subsidies for basic consumer items, there has been a rapid increase in prices as well as unemployment. Soaring costs of insurance and petrol, for example, have forced some people to give up their cars. There is an unabating housing crisis; people live in extremely overcrowded conditions.

This is the environment in which Polish anarchist and everyone else must operate. The prospect of traveling outside of Poland such as to attend the upcoming Eastern European anarchist meeting in Trieste is unimaginable without financial support from the West. The average monthly salary is about 50 US dollars. Roundtrip travel cost, visas, and daily necessities for one individual coming to Trieste are more than double the monthly income.

Italian anarchists have been raising funds for various projects and initiatives in the East. A few weeks ago, they sent 500,000 liras (a bit more than 4000 US dollars) to the Polish anarchist federation. This is an important first step and further contributions like this would certainly be welcome.

However, just as useful would be to send them information, journals, newspapers, and books. Marcin has said that several times Polish anarchists have requested western anarchist publications and then received a bill in the mail. Due to their economic

situation, they should be receiving this information for free. A specific problem is the lack of contemporary anarchist writings in the Polish language. A very worthwhile project would be to support the translation of books into Polish and assist with the publishing.



RSA "Stop Unemployment" demonstration in Poland.

More so than the other East Europeans, the Polish anarchists have been developing relations with their counterparts in other countries. Through the work of Marcin and others, they are in good with Soviets and Hungarians. Rumor has it that sometime soon, perhaps during the summer, a regional gathering of eastern A's will take place. The meeting in Trieste will help to develop a network that will facilitate the planning of this or any other future regional initiatives.

Soviet Union

In the past year, anarchism in the Soviet Union has grown by leaps and bounds.

The most notable events were the creation of the Confederation of Anarcho Syndicalists (KAS), with branches in 30 towns, a rapid increase in the number of publications and in total print run, the reactivation of the Anarchist Black Cross, an international defense network for anarchist prisoners, the founding of a commission for the study of the creative legacy of Peter Kropotkin, a reassessment in the mainstream Soviet press of historical figures such as Nestor Makhno, and an international conference of libertarian socialist and anarchist activists called "Next Stop—Soviet."

On May 1 and 2 of this year, KAS will hold their 2nd Congress in Kharkov, in the Ukraine. Surely following the developments in the USSR in the past month, this gathering will have special importance for the anarchist movement and will be well attended. The following is an excerpt of a statement from KAS reprinted in *Black Flag* (Oct. 89) and an abridged version of a letter written in Moscow by an Australian anarchist in December.

"The words 'anarchy' and 'anarcho-syndicalism' are vaguely associated in the mass consciousness either with chaos and anarchic banditry or with the 'Workers Opposition' which came out at the Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)

against Lenin. Consequently we students and school teachers took the risk of deliberately taking over the name."

"What motivates us? Above all, the fact that sometimes we have to restore justice with regard to learning, recalling that Bakunin, Makhno, the British sailors and the Catalan workers in general were not the fiends of hell they were portrayed for the many long years of Stalin/Brezhnev propaganda."

"Our motto remains the works of Bakunin: 'Freedom without socialism is privilege and injustice, socialism without freedom is slavery and brutality'."

"Speaking as a component of the socialist worker's movement, anarcho-syndicalism was

always the most consistent in upholding the idea of self-rule, federalism, and trade union democracy, independence of labor and creative collectives."

"We are principled antagonists not simply of any government or type of state but of the very idea of the state. At the same time we are not Utopians and recognize the need for evolution, for transitional periods. That is why at the present we are fighting for the transfer of real power to the central and local soviets, the restoration of soviet power and its original meaning, for the gradual transfer of the means of production into the hands of those who work, for the broad development of non-state and non-party forms of initiative on the part of the workers (the movement for preserving the cultural and natural environment, the unions of students and so on)."

"We are not against a multiplicity of parties, nor are we for such a thing. Because we consider that this is not a panacea for all ills. We do not need a multiplicity of parties—but non-party soviets in which deputies will vote not on the basis of party decisions but in accordance with the wishes of the electors. We are trying to find out how we can achieve that in our program of anarcho-syndicalist conferences." (*Black Flag*, Oct. 89)

"In the seething political scene in the Soviet Union numerous anarchist groups have sprung up. The new political climate under perestroika meant that publishing efforts and political activism in general attracted less repression. *Obschina* (Commune), a monthly anarchist magazine from Moscow since May, 1987, played a catalytic role in bringing together anarcho-syndicalists, a process which led to the founding of KAS in May, 1989."

"At a meeting in mid November when representatives of Leningrad, Gorky and Kharkov KAS publications came together to meet their Moscow colleagues, it was established that the combined print run of their publications in September '89 was over 30,000. By comparison, the only anarchist publication in January '89 was *Obschina* with 200 copies."

"KAS currently unites over 300 activists in

member groups in the European part of the USSR and several Siberian centers (Irkutsk, Khabarovsk, Vladivostok). The main thrust of their activity is informational work and education. This is particularly true of the Moscow group which is to a large extent a movement of anarchist teachers and students, who organize seminars, public meetings and demonstrations. KAS has no member groups directly involved in current mass working class militancy, like the coal miners' strikes of Vorkuta and Donbas regions, but they have had requests from workers' groups there for information on forming independent unions.

"KAS has good relations with many individual members of 'Sotspro' a reformist union group which has penetrated some official unions. Also with SMOT, the Free Interprofessional Workers Organization, which for many years worked underground collecting and distributing news on labor developments, it has some contacts but little practical cooperation. On some points KAS overlaps politically with the Democratic Union, although a major difference is that DU believes in confronting the authorities like provoking the police at demonstrations. The question of political violence has come on to the agenda of many radical groups. In November, KAS adopted a pacifist stance, seeing 'political terrorism' as leading to the strengthening of totalitarian structures and thus as counter-productive. KAS has also called for a boycott of the elections to the Soviet parliament. But considers participation in municipal election as appropriate."

"The transition from the present social and economic system to a system of decentralized self-management is a formidable task. All the more so given the conditions of the USSR. On this topic there are several points of KAS's program which anarchists from western countries may find surprising, such as a transition to certain market-economic principles, albeit within a framework of self-management."

"KAS is a new political force and its members are largely in their 20s. Few women are involved, and feminist issues are not on the agenda. Also the severe accommodation shortage throughout most of the USSR allows no freedom for alternative living arrangements. Lifestyle experimentation and free personal development are virtually impossible. There are no communes, group houses and the like which play a vital part in the radical life in many western countries. In my opinion, this is another reason why anarchist activism takes on sterile, dry and 'male' forms."

"KAS's priorities are firmly at home. International contacts are welcome, but they are not well-developed at present. Strongest links exist with Swedish anarcho-syndicalists and with the West German Greens. It is much too early for them to commit themselves to any particular platform or forum for international activity. The widening split between the Spanish CNT-AIT and the Renovados is of little relevance. For the time being KAS welcomes the exchange of ideas with all groups."

"Due to difficult material conditions in the USSR, material help is particularly sought for. Money donations are very useful. Even a small amount of western currency goes a long way in the Soviet Union. Badges, posters, magazines and books, of course, are always welcome. The interest in anarchist writings is directed towards a 'rediscovering' of Russian anarchist tradition. Books on Russian anarchism or by Russian anarchists are important in breaking down the lies and stereotypes about anarchism built up under Bolshevik rule."

"Perhaps most necessary of all is printing equipment. Stencils for offset printers are in great demand, as are computer disks. A desktop photocopier with reduction facility or a computer printer would multiply output and efficiency of anarchist printing tremendously. Anarchists in western countries please note! It is both legal and duty-free to import computer hardware into the USSR 'for personal use'! And even simple paper is

in great demand here—clean, white A4 paper is exceedingly hard to get in the USSR." (Will Firth, 28 Dec. 89)

East Germany

In the DDR, anarchist groups, a mixture of anarcho-syndicalists, nonviolent anarchists, and anarcho-punks, began to emerge in 1986. At this time during "The Day of the Church," a network of about 80, the majority from East Berlin, but also from the south, was formed.

Now with the crumbling of the Berlin Wall and the rapid disintegration of the Communist state, the anarchist presence is much stronger and visible. A notable group is Anarchistischer Arbeits und Aktionskri (Anarchist Group of Work and Action), from Mockau on the periphery of Leipzig. They comprise about 300 members and for several years have been publishing a clandestine journal, *Kopfsprung* (Diving), which now has a circulation of 6,000 copies. While actively participating in the anti-Stalinist protest movements, one of their slogans has been: "We are not working for 30 years to fall into the hands of Kohl!" The group also participated in the now famous "Monday Demonstration" and illustrated this point of view and other messages to hundreds of thousands of demonstrators.

Other projects of anarchists in East Germany include a mobile library with books and magazines which goes from city to city, and the purchasing of houses and land with money that they receive from the West German government when they cross the border. Instead of spending it in the West they return and invest it in this way.

The East Germans have connections with Frei Arbeiter union, Schwarzer Faden, and the Nonviolent Anarchist Federation in West Germany. It was reported in *Umanita Nova*, the Italian anarchist weekly, that sometime soon a meeting of 15 anarchists from West Germany and 15 from East Germany will take place in order for them to get to know each other and to discuss possible solutions to the economic crisis. As mentioned previously, the East Germans have connections with Polish and Czech anarchists.

Progress towards reunification of the two Germanies is happening so quickly that although at the time of this writing they remain separate, it is possible that at the time of publication of this article East Germany will no longer be East Germany. German reunification and its implications will definitely be on the agenda at the Trieste meeting.

Bulgaria

(direct translation from *Umanita Nova*.)

The first information about libertarian Bulgaria has begun to arrive. After the plenum of the Bulgarian Communist Party on Nov. 10, in which the old leader Jikov saw himself thrown out the door by the same who had acclaimed him just days before, numerous demonstrations, strikes, and meetings took place.

A free syndicate was born and in December one demonstration for pluralism united more than 100,000 people in Sofia. The anarchists were present in various movements with their placards and their slogans and some militants of the Federation of Anarcho-Communists of Bulgaria spoke at many meetings. In addition, the FACB has resumed publication of their historic journal, *Working Thoughts*. While waiting for further information from the Bulgarian anarchists we publish the platform chosen by FACB.

*. Total negation of the actual regime, its foreign debts, engagements, and political and economic accords.

- No steps backwards, no restoration of the past, but building a new world.

- Negation of the political system based on authoritarian parties.

- Declaration of complete freedom for all the initiatives of the people in their social relations



Mass demonstration in Prague, November 23, 1989.

based on self-management, for all local assemblies, of all the population, for the federate commune based on the region, and for a national federation of free communities.

- All economics of the country in the hands of the people.

- The land to the people that work collectively, cooperatively, individually or as a family, but without exploitation of any individuals.

- The mines, the natural resources to the miners and people engaged in mining to assure the satisfaction of a multiplicity of societal needs.

- All means of transportation of goods, materials, and people to those involved in this field.

- Direct exchange of products between companies and exchanges between producers and consumers; foreign exchange taken care of by a specific organization based on cooperation and the spirit of social solidarity.

- Complete freedom for all, of thought, of speech, or press, radio, tv, or organizations in all the branches of human activity for the transformation of life in a constructive and just social spirit.

- Real Socialist Freedom and Tolerance."

Czechoslovakia

On October 10, 1989, the Czechoslovakian Anarchist Union (CAS) publicly announced their existence. They claim to be connected to and follow the tradition of the Czech Anarchist Federation formed 65 years ago. The following is their statement which appeared in *Umanita Nova* in January.

"CAS is a free union open to everyone involved in the anarchist movement and wants to organize on the basis of free association, anarchists from every professional and social level. The main objectives of CAS are to: 1) organize free groups and to establish links and contacts between people; 2) gather and distribute theoretical and practical anarchist literature; 3) promote anti-militarism and anti-nationalism; 4) be part of an international movement; and 5) clearly denounce terrorism.

"CAS invites all groups and associations to pay attention to the intelligence and seriousness of people involved in the anarchist movement."

Albania and Romania

At the moment, only Albania and Romania are countries in Eastern Europe where there is no known anarchist activity. There is a Romanian anarchist who lives in Paris who was "home" following the uprising there in December. And supposedly afterwards a group of a few French anarchists went to visit again. But in Trieste, we have no reports from them about what they learned. And of course, Albania remains closed to the outside world. It will be the last to fall.

Meeting in Trieste

Developing anarchism within the context of a post-Communist society is a basis for solidarity and cooperation between all the anarchist groups and individuals in the Eastern European countries, a basis

for mutual understanding and mutual aid, and a basis for a broader perspective, an international perspective, one that transcends the inherent limitations of functioning with separate national points of view.

The principle aim of the meeting in Trieste, entitled "Eastern Europe: a Freedom Workshop" is to facilitate an exchange of information, amongst both anarchists in the East as well as between East and West. The meeting is principally being organized by a group called Germinal, along with support from the Italian Anarchist Federation and other independent anarchists in Italy, Yugoslavia, and France.

Germinal is comprised of 3 anarchists who have been active in Trieste since 1976. Although founded in 1945, the current Germinal has developed from the anti-authoritarian tendency of the '68 student movement and have been involved with antimilitarism, counterinformation education, antinuclear activities in addition to helping to operate Radio Libertaria, a self-managed radio station. Due to their geographical location on the border between West and East, they have closely followed with great interest the libertarian ferment in Yugoslavia and in other Eastern countries. With the beginning of the changes in East Europe last year and news about new anarchist groups, Germinal was inspired with the idea for this meeting. Originally, the idea was to have a small informal meeting. However, the situation in the East has changed significantly and at the moment it seems that well over a hundred people, anarchists from most of the eastern countries and from the West, will be coming to Trieste.

The meeting will be on the 14th, 15th, and 16th of April. The thought of the organizers is that the first day will be a general meeting of everyone, a time for each person or group to speak, to explain their own particular circumstances and what is happening with anarchism in the place that they are from. The second day will be a time to break into smaller groups to discuss specific issues, and then, finally, the last day will be to meet together once again and discuss ways to improve or establish a network of eastern anarchists, what concrete projects can be realized, and how western anarchists can be of help. The following are some proposed themes of discussion.

1) The ideological crisis of Marxism. The decline of state socialism. The development of "free market" economies. The spread of liberalism. New national and religious movements. Institutional changes such as "democratic" elections.

2) Development of opposition movements in the East. Ecological tendencies, youth, alternative groups, feminism, syndicalism, human rights. The potential for real autonomy and freedom. The reality of libertarian movements. Prospects for work and projects.

3) The opening of new and common perspectives by anarchists concerning the consequences of the unification of Germany and the new European Deal of 1992.

4) Material cooperation and direct soli-

arity between anarchists in the East and West.

The West

What role can anarchists from Western Europe, North America, and other continents play in the development of anarchism in Eastern Europe? First of all, it is important to better understand the situation there. Of course, this can be done by reading articles and reports such as this one. Another way would be to establish regular correspondence with someone in the East to keep informed. But the best way, obviously, is to go there to speak with people directly, see what they are doing, to experience their conditions of daily life.

It is clear that they could use financial assistance for a variety of needs. It is equally clear that they could use materials such as books, magazines, paper, offset printers, stencils, etc. But what kind of ideas about anarchism can we send them? What information is important to relay?

If it is indeed true that anarchism in the Soviet Union, as mentioned in Will Firth's letter, takes a "dry, sterile, and male form," perhaps we need to be helping them overcome this. And if it is true that in Poland, as in Hungary, there are strong anti-organizational tendencies and that they have great difficulties with meetings and the like, they may also need help with this.

We must remember, not to belittle them, that there is probably a twenty year cultural lag. It is not surprising if some of their forms of organizing take on very traditional characteristics. We must be sensitive to this, but at the same time be critical when criticism is due. In this regard, I thought it inappropriate that when Will Firth's letter about KAS was translated into Italian and printed in *Umanita Nova*, his criticism that KAS was "dry and sterile" was omitted.

It may be a paradox, but it is important to be sensitive and critical at the same time or better to offer constructive criticism and help. For this we can offer the best of western anarchist thought and experience that has emerged in the past two decades.

Of course, none of this will happen overnight. The first steps are to initiate dialogue and establish networks of communication for the exchange of ideas and information. This will not occur without problems, of which the greatest may be language.

While a fair number of eastern anarchists may know English, French or German, the majority don't. It is necessary that anarchist books and articles be translated into Russian, Polish, Czech, Bulgarian, etc. But who can do this? In Yugoslavia, as mentioned earlier, relative to other eastern countries, a lot has been translated. In Hungary very little, as in Poland. Perhaps in the Soviet Union there are some traditional anarchist works in their language, but it is doubtful that there is anything contemporary. For the East Germans it isn't a problem. By now they have their hands full of materials from West Germany.

So this project, although definitely worthwhile, is a big undertaking. Surely there are other equally good and better ideas, which also take time and energy and money. However, amongst the entire anarchist community in the West it is possible to coordinate efforts, cooperate and work together. At the moment there are many separate initiatives taking place, of which most know little about the others. The Italians have good relations with the Yugoslavs, but not with the Swedish who have good relations with the Soviets. The Italians have been in contact with Autonomía in Budapest, but don't know much about the anarchists in Vienna who amongst other things have set up a bank account for Autonomía. Groups in the States like Neither East Nor West in New York, may have good connections with the Polish but may be not with the other Western anarchists who are also involved with East-West networking.

The point is that while it is important and useful for anarchists in Eastern Europe to

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The Revolution of Everyday Life

Chapter 4

by Raoul Vaneigem

*The impossibility of participation:
Power as sum of constraints*

The mechanisms of attrition and destruction: humiliation (Chapter two), isolation (three), suffering (four), work (five), decompression (six).

Suffering

Suffering caused by natural alienation gave way to suffering caused by social alienation, while remedies became justifications (1). Where there was no justification, exorcism took place (2). But from now on no subterfuge can hide the existence of an organization of suffering, stemming from a social organization based on the distribution of constraints (3). Consciousness reduced to the consciousness of constraints is the antechamber of death. The despair of consciousness makes the murderers of Order; the consciousness of despair makes the murderers of Disorder (4).

1

The symphony of spoken and shouted words animates the decor of the streets. Over a rumbling *basso continuo* develop grave and cheerful themes, hoarse and singsong voices, nostalgic fragments of sentences. There is a sonorous architecture which overlays the outline of streets and buildings, reinforcing or counteracting the attractive or repulsive tone of a district. But from one end of the city to the other the basic chord is the same: its sinister resonance has sunk so deeply into everyone's mind that it no longer surprises them. "That's life," "These things are sent to try us," "You have to take the rough with the smooth," "That's the way it goes"...this lament whose weft unites the most diverse conversations has so perverted our sensibility that it passes for the commonest of human dispositions. Where it is not recognized, despair disappears from sight. Nobody seems worried that joy has been absent from European music for nearly two centuries; which says everything. Consume, consume: we take ashes for fire.

How have suffering and its rites of exorcism acquired this importance? Undoubtedly because of the struggle to survive imposed on the first men by a hostile nature, full of cruel and mysterious forces. In the face of danger, the weakness of men discovered in social agglomeration not only protection, but a way of co-operating with nature, making a truce with her and even transforming her. In the struggle against natural alienation—death, sickness, suffering—alienation became social. We escaped the rigors of exposure, hunger and discomfort only to fall into the trap of slavery. We were enslaved by gods, by men, by language. And such a slavery had its positive side: there was a certain greatness in living in terror of a god who also made you invincible. This mixture of human and inhuman would, it is true, be a sufficient explanation of the ambiguity of suffering, its way of appearing all through history as at once shameful sickness and salutary evil—as a good thing, after a fashion. But this would be to overlook the ignoble slag of religion, above all Christian mythology, which devoted all its genius to perfecting this morbid and depraved precept: protect yourself against mutilation by mutilating yourself!

"Since Christ's coming, we are delivered not from the evil of suffering but from the evil of suffering uselessly," writes the Jesuit father Charles. How right he is: power's

problem has always been, not to abolish itself, but to resign itself not to oppress 'uselessly.' Christianity, that unhealthy therapeutic, pulled off its masterstroke when it married man to suffering, whether on the basis of divine grace or of natural law. From prince to manager, from priest to expert, from father confessor to social worker, it is always the principle of useful suffering and willing sacrifice that forms the most solid base for hierarchical power. Whatever reasons it invokes—a better world, the next world, building communism or fighting communism—suffering willingly accepted is always Christian, *always*. Today the clerical vermin have given way to the missionaries of a Christ dyed red. Everywhere official pronouncements bear as their watermark the disgusting image of the crucified Christ, everywhere comrades are urged to sport the stupid halo of the militant martyr. And with their blood, the kitchen-hands of the Good Cause are mixing up the sausage-meat of the future: less cannon-fodder, more doctrine-fodder!

To begin with, bourgeois ideology seemed determined to root out suffering with as much persistence as it devoted to the pursuit of the religions that it hated. Infatuated with progress, comfort, profit, well-being, reason, it had enough weapons—if not real weapons, then at least the weapons of illusion—to convince everyone of its will to put a scientific end to the evil of suffering and the evil of faith. As we know, all it did was to invent new anesthetics and new superstitions.

Without God, suffering became 'natural,' inherent in 'human nature'; it would be overcome, but only after more suffering: the martyrs of science, the victims of progress, the lost generations. But in this very tendency the idea of natural suffering betrayed its social root. When Human Nature too was removed, suffering became social, inherent in social existence. But of course, revolutions demonstrated that the social evil of pain was not a metaphysical principle: that a form of society could exist from which the pain of living would be excluded. History shattered the social ontology of suffering, but suffering, far from disappearing, found new pretexts for existence in the exigencies of *History*, which had suddenly become trapped, in its turn, in a one-way street. China prepares children for the classless society by teaching them love of their country, love of their family and love

of work. Thus historical ontology picks up the dregs of all the metaphysical systems, all the *an sich*, of the past: God, Nature, Man, Society. From now on, people will have to make history by fighting History itself, because History has become the last ontological earthwork of power, the last ruse by which it hides behind the promise of a long weekend, its will to endure until the Saturday which will never come. Beyond fetishized history, suffering is revealed as stemming from hierarchical social organization. And when the will to put an end to hierarchical power has sufficiently tickled people's consciousness, everyone will have to admit that armed freedom and the weight of constraints have nothing metaphysical about them.

2

While it was placing happiness and freedom on the order of the day, technological civilization was also inventing the *ideology* of happiness and freedom. Thus it condemned itself to creating no more than the freedom of apathy, happiness in passivity. But at least this invention, perverted though it was, gave the lie on a universal scale to the notion that suffering was inherent in the human condition, that such an *inhuman* condition had anything eternal about it. That is why bourgeois thought fails when it tries to provide consolation for suffering; none of its justifications are as powerful as the hope which was born from its initial bet on technology and well-being.

Desperate fraternity in sickness is the worst thing that can happen to a civilization. In the twentieth century, death terrifies men less than the absence of real life. All these dead, mechanized, specialized actions, stealing a little bit of life a thousand times a day until the mind and body are exhausted, until that death which is not the end of life but the final saturation with absence: this is what lends a dangerous charm to dreams of apocalypses, gigantic destructions, complete annihilations, cruel, clean and total deaths. Auschwitz and Hiroshima are indeed the 'comfort of nihilism.' Let impotence in the face of suffering become a collective sentiment, and the demand for suffering and death can sweep a whole community. Consciously or not, most people would rather die than live a permanently unsatisfying life. Look at peace marchers: aside from an active minority of radicals, most of them are nothing but penitents trying to exorcise their desire to disappear with all the rest of humanity. They would deny it, of course, but their miserable faces gave them away. The only real joy is revolutionary.

Perhaps it is to ensure that a universal desire to perish does not take hold of men that a whole spectacle is organized around particular sufferings. A sort of nationalized philanthropy impels each person to find consolation for his own infirmities in the spectacle of other people's. Consider disaster photographs, stories of cuckolded singers, the ridiculous dramas of the gutter press. And, at the other end of the scale, the hospitals, asylums and prisons—real museums of suffering for the use of those whose fear of entering them makes them happy to be outside. I sometimes feel such a diffuse suffering dispersed through me

that I find relief in the chance misfortune that concretizes and justifies it, offers it a legitimate outlet. Nothing will dissuade me of this: the sadness I feel after a separation, a failure, a bereavement doesn't reach me from the outside like an arrow but wells up from inside me like a spring freed by a landslide. There are wounds which allow the spirit to utter a long-stifled cry. Despair never lets go its prey; it is just that the prey seizes upon a love lost or a child's death to see despair in what is really only its cast shadow. Mourning is a pretext, a convenient way of ejaculating nothingness in small drops. The tears, the cries and howls of childhood remain imprisoned in the hearts of men. For ever? In you also the emptiness is growing.

3

Another word about the alibis of power. Suppose that a tyrant took pleasure in throwing prisoners, who had been flayed alive, in a small cell; suppose that to hear their screams and see them scramble each time they brushed against one another amused him a lot, and caused him to meditate on human nature and the curious behavior of men. Suppose that at the same time and in the same country there were philosophers and wise men who explained to the worlds of science and art that suffering had to do with the collective life of men, the inevitable presence of Others, society as such—wouldn't we be right to consider these men the tyrant's watchdogs? By proclaiming such theses, existentialism has exemplified not only the collusion of left intellectuals with power, but also the crude trick by which an inhuman social organization attributes the responsibility for its cruelties to its victims themselves. A nineteenth-century critic remarked: "Throughout contemporary literature we find the tendency to regard individual suffering as a social evil and to make the organization of our society responsible for the misery and degradation of its members. This is a profoundly new idea: suffering is no longer treated as a matter of fatality." Certain thinkers steeped in fatalism have not been troubled overmuch by such novelties. Witness Sartre's hell-is-other-people, Freud's death instinct, Mao's historical necessity. After all, what distinguishes these doctrines from the stupid 'it's just human nature'?

Hierarchical social organization is like a system of hoppers lined with sharp blades. While it flays us alive, Power cleverly persuades us that we are flaying each other. It is true that to limit myself to writing this is to risk fostering a new fatalism; but I certainly intend in writing it that nobody should limit himself to reading it.

Altruism is the flipside of 'hell-is-other-people,' only here the mystification occurs in its positive form. It is time that appeals to an abstract camaraderie were reserved for disabled war veterans. For others to interest me I must first find in myself the energy for such an interest. What binds me to others must grow out of what binds me to the most exuberant and demanding part of my will to live; not the other way round. It is always myself that I am looking for in



Photo by Bob Orman & Mikell Zhan.

other people; my enrichment, my realization. Let everyone understand this and 'each for himself' taken to its ultimate conclusion will be transformed into 'all for each.' The freedom of one will be the freedom of all. A community which is not built on individual demands and their dialectic can only reinforce the oppressive violence of power. The Other in whom I do not find myself is nothing but a thing, and altruism leads me to the love of things. It urges me to love my isolation.

The viewpoint of altruism, or of solidarity (which is merely the left's name for the same thing), turns the sense of equality on its head. It becomes nothing but the common anguish of isolated associates who are humiliated, fucked over, beaten down, cuckolded and content with it. This is the anguish of monads aspiring to unity—not a real unity but a mystical one. Anything will do: the Nation, the Labor Movement—no matter what, so long as it purveys that drunken Saturday-night feeling that we are 'all brothers.' Equality in the great family of man reeks of the incense of religious mysti-

fication. You need a stuffed-up nose to miss the stink.

For myself, I recognize no equality except that which my will to live according to my desires recognizes in the will to live of others. Revolutionary equality will be indivisibly individual and collective.

4

The perspective of Power has only one horizon: death. And life goes to this well of despair so often that in the end it falls in and drowns. Wherever the fresh water of life stagnates, the features of the drowned man reflect the faces of the living: the

*'To work on the side of
delight and authentic
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positive, looked at closely, turns out to be negative, the young are already old and everything we are building is already a ruin. In the realm of despair, lucidity blinds just as much as falsehood. We die of not knowing, struck down from behind. And the knowledge of the death that awaits us only increases the torture and hastens the agony. The disease of attrition that checks, shackles and forbids our actions eats us away more surely than cancer, but nothing spreads the disease like the acute consciousness of this attrition. What can save a man who is continually asked: have you noticed the hand that, with all due respect, is killing you? To evaluate the effect of each tiny persecution, to estimate neurologically the weight of each constraint, would be enough to flood the strongest individual with a single feeling, the feeling of total and terrible powerlessness. The maggots of constraint are spawned in the very depths of the mind; nothing human can resist them.

Sometimes I feel as if Power is making me like itself: a great energy on the point

of collapsing, a rage powerless to break out, a desire for wholeness suddenly petrified. An impotent order survives only by ensuring the impotence of its slaves: Franco and Batista demonstrated this fact with brio when they castrated captured revolutionaries. The regimes jokingly known as 'democratic' merely humanize castration. At first sight, to bring on old age prematurely seems less feudal than the use of knife and ligature. But only at first sight; for as soon as a lucid mind has understood that impotence now strikes through the mind itself, we might as well pack up and go home.

There is a kind of understanding which is allowed by Power because it serves its purposes. To attain one's lucidity from the light of Power only unveils the darkness of despair, feeding one's truth on lies. Aesthetically, the choice is clear: either death against power, or death in power: Arthur Cravan and Jacques Vaché on one side, the SS, the mercenary and the hired killer on the other. For them death is a logical and natural end, the final confirmation of a permanent state of affairs, the last dot of a lifeline on which, in the end, nothing was written. Everyone who does not resist the almost universal attraction of power meets the same fate: the stupid and confused always, very often the intelligent too. The same rift is to be found in Drieu and Jacques Rigaux, but they came down on different sides: the impotence of the first was molded in submission and servility, the revolt of the second smashed itself prematurely against the impossible. The despair of consciousness makes the murderers of Order, the consciousness of despair makes the murderers of Disorder. The relapse into conformity of the so-called anarchists of the right is caused by the same gravitational pull as the fall of the damned archangels into the iron jaws of suffering. The rattles of counter-revolution echo through the vaults of despair.

Suffering is the sickness of constraints. An atom of pure delight, no matter how small, will hold it at bay. To work on the side of delight and authentic festivity can hardly be distinguished from preparing for a general insurrection.

The times are propelling us into a gigantic search-and-destroy mission in pursuit of myths and received ideas. But let there be no mistake, we are sent out defenseless—or what is worse, armed only with the paper weapons of pure speculation—in the swamp of constraints, and it will very likely engulf us. Perhaps we will get our first taste of joy by pushing the ideologists of demystification in front of us, so that we can see how they make out, and either take advantage of their exploits or advance over their bodies.

As Rosanov says, people are crushed under the wardrobe. Without lifting up the wardrobe it is impossible to deliver whole peoples from their endless and unbearable suffering. It is terrible that even one person should be crushed under such a weight: to want to breathe, and not be able to. The wardrobe rests on everybody, and everyone tries to lift up the wardrobe, but not with the same conviction, not with the same energy. An odd, groaning civilization.

Thinkers ask themselves: "What? People under the wardrobe? However did they get there?" All the same, they got there. And if someone comes along and proves in the name of objectivity that the burden can never be removed, each of his words adds to the weight of the wardrobe, that object which he means to describe with the universality of his 'objective consciousness.' And the whole Christian spirit is there, fondling suffering like a good dog and handing out photographs of crushed but smiling people. "The rationality of the wardrobe is always the best," proclaim the thousands of books published every day to be stacked in the wardrobe. And all the while everyone wants to breathe and no one can breathe, and many say, "We will breathe later," and most do not die, because they are already dead.

It is now or never.

By John Zerzan
Photography by Mikell Zhan

The mass psychology of Misery

Quite a while ago, just before the upheavals of the '60s—shifts that have not ceased, but have been forced in less direct, less public directions—Marcuse, in his *One-Dimensional Man*, described a populace characterized by flattened personality, satisfied and content. With the pervasive anguish of today, who could be so described? Therein lies a deep, if inchoate critique.

Much theorizing has announced the erosion of individuality's last remnants, but if this were so, if society now consists of the thoroughly homogenized and domesticated, how can there remain the enduring tension which must account for such levels of pain and loss? More and more people I have known have cracked up. It's going on to a staggering degree, in a context of generalized, severe emotional dis-ease.

Marx predicted, erroneously, that a deepening material immiseration would lead to revolt and to capital's downfall. Might it not be that an increasing psychic suffering is itself leading to the reopening of revolt—indeed, that this may even be the last hope of resistance?

And yet it is obvious that "mere" suffering is no guarantee of anything. "Desire does not 'want' revolution, it is revolutionary in its own right," as Deleuze and Guattari pointed out, while further on in *Anti-Oedipus*, remembering fascism, noting that people have desired against their own interests, and that tolerance of humiliation and enslavement remains widespread.

We know that behind psychic repression and avoidance stands social repression, even as massive denial shows at least some signs of giving way to a necessary confrontation with reality in all of its dimensions. Awareness of the social must not mean ignoring the personal, for that would only repeat, in its own terms, the main error of psychology. If in the nightmare of today each of us has his or her fears and limitations, there is no liberating route that forgets the primacy of the whole, including how that whole exists in each of us.

Stress, loneliness, depression, boredom—the madness of everyday life. Ever-greater levels of sadness, implying a recognition, on the visceral level at least, that things could be different.

How much joy is there left in the technological society, this field of alienation and anxiety? Mental health epidemiologists suspect that no more than 20 percent of us are free of psychopathological symptoms. Thus we act out a "pathology of normalcy" marked by the chronic psychic impoverishment of a qualitatively unhealthy society.

Arthur Barsky's *Worried Sick* (1988) diagnoses an American condition where, despite all the medical "advances," the population has never felt such a "constant need for medical care." The crisis of the family and of personal life in general sees to it that the pursuit of health, and emotional health in particular, has reached truly industrial proportions. A work-life increasingly toxic in every sense of the word joins the disintegration of the family to fuel the soaring growth of the corporate industrial health machine. But for a public in its misery dramatically more interested in health care than ever before, the dominant model of medical care is clearly only part of the problem, not its solution. Thus Thomas Bittker writes of "The Industrialization of American Psychiatry" (*American Journal of Psychiatry*, February 1985) and Gina Kolata discusses how much distrust of doctors exists, as medicine is seen as just another business (*New York Times*, February 20, 1990).

The mental disorder of going along with things as they are is now treated almost entirely by biochemicals, to reduce the individual's consciousness of socially induced anguish. Tranquilizers are now the world's most widely prescribed drugs, and anti-depressants set record sales as well. Temporary relief, despite side-effects and addictive properties, is easily obtained while we are all ground down a little more. The burden of simply getting by is "Why All Those People Feel They Never Have Any Time," according to Trish Hall (*New York Times*, January 2, 1988), who concluded that "everybody just seems to feel worn out" by it all.

An October '89 Gallup poll found that stress-related illness is becoming the leading hazard in the nation's workplaces, and a month later an almost five-fold increase in California stress-related disability claims was reported to have occurred between 1982 and 1986. More recent figures estimate that al-

most two-thirds of new cases in employee assistance programs represent psychiatric or stress symptoms. In his *Modern Madness* (1986), Douglas La Bier asked, "What is it about work today that can cause such harm?" Part of the answer is found in a growing literature that reveals the Information Age "office of tomorrow" to be no better than the sweatshop of yesteryear. In fact, computerization introduces a neo-Taylorist monitoring of work that surpasses all earlier management control techniques. The "technological whip" now increasingly held over white-collar workers prompted Curt Supplee, in a January '90 *Washington Post* article to judge, "We have seen the future, and it hurts." A few months earlier Sue Miller wrote in the *Baltimore Evening Sun* of another part of the job burnout picture, referring to a national clinical psychology study that determined that no less than a staggering 93 percent of American women "are caught up in a blues epidemic."

Meanwhile, the suicide and homicide rates are rising in the U.S. and 80 percent of the populace admit to having at least thought of suicide. Teenage suicide has risen enormously in the past three decades, and the number of teens locked up in mental wards has soared since 1970. So very many ways to gauge the pain: serious obesity among children has increased more than 50 percent in the last 15 to 20 years; severe eating disorders (bulimia and anorexia) among college women are now relatively common; sexual dysfunction is widespread; the incidence of panic and anxiety attacks rising to the point of possibly overtaking depression as our most general psychological malady; isolation and a sense of meaninglessness continue to make even absurd cults and TV evangelism seem attractive to many.

The litany of cultural symptomatics is virtually endless. Despite its generally escapist function, even much of contemporary film reflects the malaise; see Robert Phillip Kolker's *A Cinema of Loneliness: Penn, Kubrick, Scorsese, Spielberg, Altman*, for example. And many recent novels are even more unflinching in their depiction of the desolation and degradation of society, and the burnout of youth in particular, e.g. Bret Easton Ellis' *Less Than Zero*, Fred Pfall's *Goodman 2020*, and *The*

Knockout Artist by Harry Crews, to mention just a few.

In this context of immiseration, what is happening to prevailing values and mores is of signal interest in further situating our "mass psychology" and its significance. There are plenty of signs that the demand for "instant gratification" is more and more insistent, bringing with it outraged lamentations from both left and right and a further corrosion of the structure of repression.

Credit card fraud, chiefly the deliberate running up of bills, reached the billion and a half dollar level in 1988 as the personal bankruptcy solution to debt, which doubled between 1980 and 1990. Defaults on federal student loans more than quadrupled from 1983 to 1989.

In November '89, in a totally unprecedented action, the U.S. Navy was forced to suspend operations worldwide for 48 hours owing to a rash of accidents involving deaths and injuries over the preceding 3 weeks. A total safety review was involved in the moratorium, which renewed discussion of drug abuse, absenteeism, unqualified personnel, and other problems threatening the Navy's very capacity to function.

Meanwhile, levels of employee theft reach ever higher levels. In 1989 the Dallas Police Department reported a 29 percent increase in retail shrinkage over the previous five years and a national survey conducted by London House said 62 percent of fast-food employees admitted stealing from employers. In early 1990 the FBI disclosed that shoplifting was up 35 percent since 1984, cutting heavily into retail profits.

November 1988 broke a forty-year mark for low voter turnout, continuing a downward direction in electoral participation that has plagued presidential elections since 1960. Average college entrance exam (SAT) scores declined throughout the '70s and early '80s, then rebounded very slightly, and in 1988 continued to fall. At the beginning of the '80s Arthur Levin's portrait of college students, *When Dreams and Heroes Died*, recounted "a generalized cynicism and lack of trust," while at the end of the decade Robert Nisbet's *The Present Age: Progress and Anarchy in North America* decried the disastrous effects that the younger generation's attitude of "hanging loose" was having on the sys-

tem. George F. Will, for his part, reminded us all that social arrangements, including the authority of the government, rest "on a willingness of the public to believe in them," and Harvard economist Harvey Liebenstein's *Inside the Firm* echoed him in stressing that companies must depend on the kind of work their employees want to do.

The nation's high schools now graduate barely 70 percent of students who enter as freshman, despite massive focus on the dropout rate problem. As Michael de Courcy Hinds put it (New York Times, February 17, 1990), "U.S. educators are trying almost anything to keep children in school," while an even more fundamental phenomenon is the rising number of people of all ages unwilling to learn to read and write. David Harman (*Illiteracy: A National Dilemma*, 1987) gave voice to how baffling the situation is, asking why has the acquisition of such skills, "seemingly so simple, been so evasive?"

The answer may be that illiteracy, like schooling, is increasingly seen to be valued merely for its contribution to the workplace. The refusal of literacy is but another sign of a deep turn-off from the system, part of the spreading disaffection. In mid-1988 a Hooper survey indicated that work now ranks eighth out of 10 on a scale of important satisfactions in life, and 1989 showed the lowest annual productivity growth since the 1981-83 recession. The drug "epidemic," which cost the government almost \$25 billion to combat in the '80s, threatens society most acutely at the level of the refusal of work and sacrifice. There is no "war on drugs" that can touch the situation while at the same time defending this landscape of pain and false values. The need for escape grows stronger and the sick social order feels consequent desertion, the steady corrosion of all that holds it up.

Unfortunately, the biggest "escape" of all is one that serves, in the main, to preserve the distorted present: what Sennett has called "the increasing importance of psychology in bourgeois life." This includes the extraordinary proliferation of new kinds of therapy since the '60s, and behind this phenomenon the rise of psychology as the predominant religion. In the Psychological Society the individual sees himself as a problem. This ideology constitutes a pre-eminent social imprisonment, because it denies the social; psychology refuses to consider that society as a whole shares fundamental responsibility for the conditions produced in every human being.

The ramifications of this ideology can be seen on all sides. For instance, the advice to those besieged by work stress to "take a deep breath, laugh, walk it off," etc. Or the moralizing exhortations to recycle, as if a personal ethics of consumption is a real answer to the global eco-crisis caused by industrial production. Or the 1990 California Task Force to Promote Self-Esteem as a solution to the major social breakdown in that state.

At the very center of contemporary life, this outlook legitimates alienation, loneliness, despair, and anxiety, because it cannot see the context for our malaise. It privatizes distress, and suggests that only non-social responses are attainable. This "bottomless fraud of mere inwardness," in Adorno's words, pervades every aspect of American life, mystifying experience and thus perpetuating oppression.

The widespread allegiance to a therapeutic world view constitutes a culture tyrannized by the therapeutic in which, in the name of mental health, we are getting mental dis-ease. With the expanding influence of behavioral experts powerlessness and estrangement expand as well: modern life must be interpreted for us by the new expertise and its popularizers.

Gail Sheehy's *Passages* (1977), for example, considers life developments without reference to any social or historical context, thereby vitiating her concern for the "free and autonomous self." Arlie Russell Hochschild's *Managed Heart* (1983) focuses on the "commercialization of human feelings" in an

increasingly service sector economy and manages to avoid any questioning of the totality by remaining ignorant of the fact of class society and the unhappiness it produces. *When Society Becomes an Addict* (1987) is Anne Wilson Schaef's completely incoherent attempt to deny, despite the title, the existence of society, by dealing strictly with the interpersonal. And these books are among the least escapist of the avalanche of "how-to" therapy books inundating the bookstores and supermarkets.

It is clear that psychology is part of the absence of community or solidarity, and of the accelerating social disintegration. The emphasis is on changing one's personality, and avoiding at all costs the facts of bureaucratic consumer capitalism and its meaning to our lives and consciousness. Consider Samuel Klarreich's *Stress Solution* (1988): "...I believe that we can largely determine what will be stressful, and how much it will interfere with our lives, by the views we uphold irrespective of what goes on in the workplace." Under the sign of productivity, the citizen is now trained as a lifelong inmate of an indus-

trial world, a condition, as Ivan Illich noted, not unrelated to the fact that everyone tends toward the condition of therapy's patient, or at least tends to accept its world-view.

In the Psychological Society, social conflicts of all kinds are automatically shifted to the level of psychic problems, in order that they can be charged to individuals as private matters. Schooling produces near-universal resistance, which is classified, for example, as "hyperkinesis" and dealt with by drugs and/or psychiatric ideology. Rather than recognize the child's protest, his or her life is invaded still further, to ensure that no one eludes the therapeutic net.

It is clear that a retreat from the social, based largely on the experience of defeat and consequent resignation, promotes the personal as the only possible terrain of authenticity. A desperate denizen of the "singles world" is quoted by Louise Banikow: "My ambition is wholly personal now. All I want to do is fall in love." But the demand for fulfillment, however circumscribed by psy-

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The mass psychology of Misery

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chology, is that of a ravening hunger and a level of suffering that threaten to burst the bonds of the prescribed inner world. As noted above, indifference to authority, distrust of institutions, and a spreading nihilism mean that the therapeutic can neither satisfy the individual nor ultimately safeguard the social order. Toynbee noted that a decadent culture furthers the rise of a new church that extends hope to the proletariat while servicing only the needs of the ruling class. Perhaps sooner than later people will begin to realize that psychology is this Church, which may be the reason why so many voices of therapy now counsel their flocks against "unrealistic expectations" of what life could be.

For over half a century the regulative, hierarchical needs of a bureaucratic-consumerist system have sought modern means of control and prediction. The same consolatory ideology of the psychological outlook, in which the self is the over-arching form of reality, has served these control needs and owes most of its assumptions to Sigmund Freud.

For Freud and his Wagnerian theory of warring instincts and the arbitrary division of the self into id, ego and superego, the passions of the individual were primordial and dangerous. The work of civilization was to check and harness them. The whole edifice of psychoanalysis, Freud said is based upon the theory of necessary repression; domination is obviously assisted by this view. That human culture is established only by means of suffering, that constant renunciation of desire is inevitable for continuance of civilization, that work is sustained by the energy of stifled love—all this is required by the "natural aggressiveness" of "human nature," the latter an eternal and universal fact, of course.

Understanding fully the deforming force of all this repression, Freud considered it likely that neurosis has come to characterize all of humanity. Despite his growing fear of fascism after World War I, he nonetheless contributed to its growth by justifying the renunciation of happiness. Reich referred to Freud and Hitler with some bitterness, observing that "a few years later, a pathological genius—making the best of ignorance and fear of happiness—brought Europe to the verge of destruction with the slogan of 'heroic renunciation.'"

With the Oedipus complex, inescapable source of guilt and repression, we see Freud again as the consummate Hobbesian. This universal condition is the vehicle whereby self-imposed taboos are learned via the (male) childhood experience of fear of the father and lust for the mother. It is based on Freud's reactionary fairy tale of a primal horde dominated by a powerful father who possessed all available women and who was killed and devoured by his sons. This was ludicrous anthropology even when penned, and fully exhibits one of Freud's most basic errors, that of equating society with civilization. There is now convincing evidence that precivilized life was a time of non-dominance and equality, certainly not the bizarre patriarchy Freud provided as origin of most of our sense of guilt and shame. He remained convinced of the inescapability of the Oedipal background, and the central validity of both the Oedipal complex and of guilt itself for the interests of culture.

Freud considered psychic life as shut in on itself, uninfluenced by society. This premise leads to a deterministic view of childhood and even infancy, along with such judgments as "the fear of becoming poor is derived from regressive anal eroticism." Consider his *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, and its ten editions between 1904 and 1924 to which new examples of "slips," or unintended revelatory usages of words, were continually added. We do not find a single



instance, despite the upheavals of many of those years in and near Austria, of Freud detecting a "slip" that related to fear of revolution on the part of his bourgeois subjects, or even of any day-to-day social fears, such as related to strikes, insubordination, or the like. It seems more than likely that unrepressed slips concerning such matters were simple screened out as unimportant to his universalist, ahistorical views.

Also worth noting is Freud's "discovery" of the death instinct. In his deepening pessimism, he countered Eros, the life instinct, with Thanatos, a craving for death and destruction, as fundamental and ineradicable a part of the species as striving for life. "The aim of all life is death," simply put (1920). While it may be pedestrian to note that this discovery was accompanied by the mass carnage of World War I, an increasingly unhappy marriage, and the onset of cancer of the jaw, there is no mistaking the service this dystopian metaphysics performs in justifying authority. The assumption of the death instinct, that aggression, hatred, and fear will always be with us, militates against the idea that liberation is possible. In later decades, the death instinct-oriented work of Melanie Klein flourished in English ruling circles precisely because of its emphasis on social restraints in limiting aggressiveness. Today's leading neo-Freudian, Lacan, also seems to see suffering and domination as inevitable; specifically, he holds that patriarchy is a law of nature.

Marcuse, Norman O. Brown and others have re-theorized Freud in a radical direction by taking his ideas as descriptive rather than prescriptive, and there is a limited plausibility to an orientation that takes his dark views as valid only with respect to alienated life, rather than to any and all imaginable social worlds. There are even many Freudian feminists, whose efforts to apply psychoanalytic dogma to the oppression of women, however, appear even more contrived.

Freud did identify the "female principle" as closer to nature, less sublimated, less

diffused through repression than that of the male, but true to his overall values, he located an essential advance in civilization in the victory of male intellectuality over womanly sensuality. What is saddest about the various attempts to reappropriate Freud is the absence of a critique of civilization: his entire work is predicated on the acceptance of civilization as highest value. And basic in a methodological sense, regarding those who would merely reorient the Freudian edifice, is Foucault's warning that the will to any system "is to extend our participation in the present system."

In the area of gender difference, Freud straightforwardly affirmed the basic inferiority of the female. His view of women as castrated men is a case of biological determinism: anatomically they are simply less, and condemned by this to masochism and penis envy.

I make no pretense to completeness or depth in this brief look at Freud, but it should be already obvious how false was his disclaimer (*New Introductory Lectures*, 1933) that Freudianism posits any values beyond those inherent in "objective" science. And to this fundamental failing could be added the arbitrary nature of virtually all of his philosophy. Divorced as it pointedly is from gross social reality—further examples are legion, but seduction theory comes to mind, in which he declared that sexual abuse is, most importantly, fantasy—one Freudian inference could just as plausibly be replaced by a different one. Overall, we encounter, in the summary of Frederick Crews, "a doctrine plagued by mechanism, reification, and arbitrary universalism."

On the level of treatment, by his own accounts, Freud never was able to permanently cure a single patient, and psychoanalysis has proven no more effective since. In 1984 the National Institute of Mental Health estimated that over 40 million Americans are mentally ill, while a study by Regier, Boyd et al. (*Archives of General Psychiatry*, November 1988) showed that 15 percent of the adult population had a "psy-

chiatric disorder." One obvious dimension of this worsening situation, in Joel Kovel's words, is the contemporary family, which "has fallen into a morass of permanent crisis," as indicated by the endless stream of emotionally disabled individuals it turns over to the mental health industry.

If alienation is the essence of all psychiatric conditions, psychology is the study of the alienated, but lacks the awareness that this is so. The effect of the total society, in which the individual can no longer recognize himself or herself, is, by the canons of Freud and the Psychological Society, seen as irrelevant to diagnosis and treatment. Thus psychiatry appropriates disabling pain and frustration, redefines them as illnesses and, in some cases, is able to suppress the symptoms. Meanwhile, a morbid world continues its estranging technological rationality that excludes any continuously spontaneous, affective life: the person is subjected to a discipline designed, at the expense of the sensuous, to make him or her an instrument of production.

Mental illness is primarily an unconscious escape from this design, a form of passive resistance. R.D. Laing spoke of schizophrenia as a psychic numbing which feigns a kind of death to preserve something of one's inner aliveness. The representative schizophrenic is around 20, at the point of culmination of the long period of socialization which has prepared him to take up his role in the workplace. He is not "adequate" to this destiny. Historically, it is noteworthy that schizophrenia is very closely related to industrialism, as Torrey shows convincingly in his *Schizophrenia and Civilization* (1980).

In recent years Szasz, Foucault, Goffman, and others have called attention to the ideological preconceptions through which "mental illness" is seen. "Objective" language cloaks cultural biases, as in the case, for instance, of sexual "disorders": in the 19th century masturbation was treated as a disease, and it has only been within the past 20 years that the psychological establishment declassified homosexuality as illness.

And it has long been transparent that there is a class component to the origins and treatment of mental illness. Not only is what is called "eccentric" among the rich often termed psychiatric disorder—and treated quite differently—among the poor, but many studies since Hollingshead and Redlich's *Social Class and Mental Illness* (1958) have demonstrated how much more likely are the poor to become emotionally disabled. Roy Porter observed that because it imagines power, madness is both impotence and omnipotence, which serves as a reminder that due to the influence of alienation, powerlessness, and poverty, women are more often driven to breakdown than men. Society makes us all feel manipulated and thus mistrustful: "paranoid," and who could not be depressed? The gap between the alleged neutrality and wisdom of the medical model and the rising levels of pain and dis-ease is widening, the credibility of the former visibly corroding.

It has been the failure of earlier forms of social control that has given psychological medicine, with its inherently expansionist aims, its upward trajectory in the past three decades. The therapeutic model of authority (and the supposedly value-free professional power that backs it up) is increasingly intertwined with state power, and has mounted an invasion of the self much more far reaching than earlier efforts. "There are no limits to the ambition of psychoanalytic control; if it had its way, nothing would escape it," according to Guattari.

In terms of the medicalization of deviant behavior, a great deal more is included, than, say, the psychiatric sanctions on Soviet dissidents or the rise of a battery of mind-control techniques, including behavior modification, in U.S. prisons. Punishment has come to include treatment and treatment new powers of punishment; medicine, psychology, education and social work take over more and more aspects of control and discipline while the legal machinery grows

more medical, psychological, pedagogical. But the new arrangements, relying chiefly on fear and necessitating more and more cooperation by the ruled in order to function, are no guarantee of civic harmony. In fact, with their overall failure, class society is running out of tactics and excuses, and the new encroachments have created new pockets of resistance.

The setup now usually referred to as "community mental health" can be legitimately traced to the establishment of the Mental Hygiene Movement in 1908. In the context of the Taylorist degradation of work called Scientific Management and a challenging tide of worker militancy, the new psychological offensive was based on the dictum that "individual unrest to a large degree means bad mental hygiene." Community psychiatry represents a later, nationalized form of this industrial psychology, developed to deflect radical currents away from social transformation objectives and back under the yoke of the dominating logic of productivity. By the 1920s, the workers had become the objects of social science professionals to an even greater degree, with the work of Elton Mayo and others, at a time when the promotion of consumption as a way of life came to be seen as itself a means of easing unrest, collective and individual. And by the end of the 1930s, industrial psychology had "already developed many of the central innovations which now characterize community psychology," according to Diana Ralph's *Work and Madness* (1983), such as mass psychological testing, the mental health team, auxiliary non-professional counselors, family and out-patient therapy, and psychiatric counseling to businesses.

The million-plus men rejected by the armed forces during World War II for "mental unfitness" and the steady rise, observable since the mid-50s, in stress-related illnesses called attention to the immensely crippling nature of modern industrial alienation. Government funding was called for and provided by the 1963 federal Community Mental Health Center legislation. Armed with the relatively new tranquilizing drugs to anesthetize the poor as well as the unemployed, a state presence was initiated in urban areas hitherto beyond the reach of the therapeutic ethos. Small wonder that some black militants saw the new mental health services as basically refined police pacification and surveillance systems for the ghettos. The concerns of the dominant order, ever anxious about the masses, are chiefly served, however, here as elsewhere, by the strength of the image of what science has shown to be normal, healthy, and productive. Authority's best friend is relentless self-inspection according to the ruling canons of repressive normalcy in the Psychological Society.

The nuclear family once provided the psychic underpinning of what Norman O. Brown called "the nightmare of infinitely expanding technological progress." Thought by some to be a bastion against the outer world, it has always served as transmission belt for the reigning ideology, more specifically as the place in which the interiorizing psychology of women is produced, the social and economic exploitation of women is legitimated, and the artificial scarcity of sexuality is guarded.

Meanwhile, the state's concern with delinquent, uneducable and unsocializable children, as studied by Donzelot and others, is but one aspect of its overshadowing of the family. Behind the medicalized image of the good, the state advances and the family steadily loses its functions. Rothbaum and Weisz, in *Child Psychopathology and the Quest for Control* (1989), discuss the very rapid rise of their subject, while Castel, Castel and Lovell's earlier *The Psychiatric Society* (1982) could glimpse the nearing day "when childhood will be totally regimented by medicine and psychology." Some facets of this trend are no longer in the realm of conjecture; James R. Schiffman, for instance, wrote of one byproduct of the bat-



tered family in his "Teen-Agers End Up in Psychiatric Hospitals in Alarming Numbers" (*Wall Street Journal*, Feb. 3, 1989).

Therapy is a key ritual of our prevailing psychological religion and a vigorously growing one. The American Psychiatric Association's membership jumped from 27,355 in 1983 to 36,223 by the end of the '80s, and in 1989 a record 22 million visited psychiatrists or other therapists covered to at least some extent by health insurance plans. Considering that only a small minority of those who practice the estimated 500 varieties of psychotherapy are psychiatrists or otherwise health insurance-recognized, even these figures do not capture the magnitude of therapy's shadow world.

Philip Rieff termed psychoanalysis "yet another method of learning how to endure the loneliness produced by culture," which is a good enough way to introduce the artificial situation and relationship of therapy, a peculiarly distanced, circumscribed and asymmetrical affair. Most of the time, one person talks and the other listens. The client almost always talks about himself and the therapist almost never does. The therapist scrupulously eschews social contact with clients, another reminder to the latter that they have not been talking to a friend, along with the strict time limits enclosing a space divorced from everyday reality. Similarly, the purely contractual nature of the therapeutic connection in itself guarantees that all therapy inevitably reproduces alienated society. To deal with alienation via a relationship paid for by the hour is to overlook the congruence of therapist and prostitute as regards the traits just enumerated.

Gramsci defined "intellectual" as the "functionary in charge of consent," a formulation which also fits the role of therapist. By leading others to concentrate their "desiring energy outside the social territory," as Guattari put it, he thereby manipulates them into accepting the constraints of society. By failing to challenge the social categories within which clients have organized their experiences, the therapist strengthens the hold of those categories. He tries, typi-

cally, to focus clients away from stories about work and into the so-called "real" areas—personal life and childhood.

Psychological health, as a function of therapy, is largely an educational procedure. The project is that of a shared system: the client is led to acceptance of the therapist's basic assumptions and metaphysics. Francois Roustang, in *Psychoanalysis Never Lets Go* (1983), wondered why a therapeutic method whose "explicit aim is the liberation of forces with a view toward being capable 'of enjoyment and efficiency' (Freud) so often ends in alienation either...because the treatment turns out to be interminable, or...(the client) adopts the manner of speech and thought, the theses as well as the prejudices of psychoanalysis."

Ever since Hans Lysenko's short but famous article of 1952, "The Effects of Psychotherapy," countless other studies have validated his finding: "Persons given intensive and prolonged psychotherapy are no better off than those in matched control groups given no treatment over the same time interval." On the other hand, there is no doubt that therapy or counseling does make many people feel better, regardless of specific results. This anomaly must be due to the fact that consumers of therapy believe they have been cared for, comforted, listened to. In a society growing ever colder, this is no small thing. It is also true that the Psychological Society conditions its subjects into blaming themselves and that those who most feel they need therapy tend to be those most easily exploited: the loneliest, most insecure, nervous, depressed, etc. It is easy to state the old dictum, "Natura sanat, medicus curat" (Nature heals, doctors/counselors/therapists treat), but where is the natural in the hyperestranged world of pain and isolation we find ourselves in? And yet there is no getting around the imperative to remake the world. If therapy is to heal, make whole, what other possibility is there but to transform this world, which would of course also constitute a de-therapizing of society. It is clearly in this spirit that the Situationist International declared in 1963,

"Sooner or later the S.I. must define itself as a therapeutic."

Unfortunately, the great communal causes later in the decade acquired a specifically therapeutic cast mainly in their degeneration, in the splintering of the '60s thrust into smaller, more idiosyncratic efforts. "The personal is the political" gave way to the merely personal, as defeat and disillusion overtook naive activism.

Conceived out of critical responses to Freudian psychoanalysis, which has shifted its sights toward ever-earlier phases of development in childhood and infancy, the Human Potential Movement began in the mid-60s and acquired its characteristic features by the early '70s. With a post-Freudian emphasis on the conscious ego and its actualization, Human Potential set forth a smorgasbord of therapies, including varieties or amalgams of personal growth seminars, body awareness techniques, and Eastern spiritual disciplines. Almost buried in the welter of partial solutions lies a subversive potential: the notion that, as Adelaide Bry put it, life "can be a time of infinite and joyous possibility." The demand for instant relief from psychic immiseration underlined an increasing concern for the dignity and fulfillment of individuals, and Daniel Yankelovich (*New Rules*, 1981) saw the cultural centrality of this quest, concluding that by the end of the '70s, some 80 percent of Americans had become interested in this therapeutic search for transformation.

But the privatized approaches of the Human Potential Movement, high-water mark of contemporary Psychological Society, were obviously unable to deliver on their promises to provide any lasting, non-illusory breakthroughs. Arthur Janov recognized that "everyone in this society is in a lot of pain," but expressed no awareness at all of the repressive society generating it. His Primal Scream technique qualifies as the most ludicrous cure-all of the '70s. Scientology's promise of empowerment consisted mainly of bioelectronic feedback technologies aimed at socializing people to an authoritarian enterprise and world view. The popularity of cult groups like the Moonies reminds one of a time-tested process for the uninitiated: isolation, deprivation, anticipation, and suggestion; brainwashing and the shamanic vision-quest both use it.

Werner Erhard's est, speaking of intensive psychological manipulation, was one of the most popular and, in some ways, most characteristic Human Potential phenomena. Its founder became very wealthy by helping Erhard Seminars Training adepts "choose to become what they are." In a classic case of blaming the victim, est brought large numbers to a near-religious embrace of one of the system's basic lies: its graduates are obediently conformist because they "accept responsibility" for having created things as they are. Transcendental Meditation actually marketed itself in terms of the passive incorporation into society it helped its students achieve. TM's alleged usefulness for adjustment to the varied "excesses and stresses" of modern society was a major selling point to corporations, for example.

Trapped in a highly rationalized and technological world, Human Potential seekers naturally wanted personal development, emotional immediacy, and above all, a sense of having some control over their lives. Self-help best-sellers of the '70s, including *Power*, *Your Erroneous Zones*, *How to Take Charge of Your Life*, *Self-Creation*, *Looking Out for #1*, and *Pulling Your Own Strings*, focus on the issue of control. Preaching the gospel of reality as a personal construct, however, meant that control had to be narrowly defined. Once again acceptance of social reality as a given meant, for example, that "sensitivity training" would likely mean continued insensitivity to most of reality, an openness to more of the same alienation—more ignorance, more suffering.

The Human Potential Movement did at least raise publicly and widely the notion of an end to dis-ease, however much it failed

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The mass psychology of Misery

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to make good on that claim. As more and more of everyday life has come under medical dominion and supervision, the almost bewildering array of new therapies was part of an undercutting of the older, mainly Freudian, "scientific" model for behavior. In the shift of therapeutic expectations, a radical hope appeared, which went beyond merely positive-thinking or empty confessionalist aspects and is different from quiescence.

A current form of self-help which clearly represents a step forward from both traditional therapy, commodified and under the direction of expertise, and the mass-marketed seminar-introduction sort of training is the very popular support group. Non-commercial and based on peer group equality, support groups for many types of emotional distress have quadrupled in number in the past ten years. Where these groups do not enforce the 12-step ideology of "anonymous" groups (e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous) based on the individual's subjection to a "Higher Power" (read: all constituted authority)—and most of them do not—they provide a great source of solidarity, and work against the depoliticizing force of illness or distress experienced in an isolated state.

If the Human Potential Movement thought it possible to re-create personality and thus transform life, New Ageism goes it one better with its central slogan, "Create your own reality." Considering the advancing, invasive desolation, an alternative reality seems desirable—the eternal consolation of religion. For the New Age, booming since the mid-1980s, is essentially a religious turning away from reality by people who are overloaded by feelings of helplessness and powerlessness, a more definitive turning away than that of the prevailing psychological evasion. Religion invents a realm of non-alienation to compensate for the actual one; New Age philosophy announces a coming new era of harmony and peace, obviously inverting the present, unacceptable state. An undemanding, eclectic, materialistic substitute religion where any balm, any occult nonsense—channeling, crystal healing, reincarnation, rescue by UFOs, etc.—goes. "It's true if you believe it."

Anything goes, so long as it goes along with what authority has ordained: anger is "unhealthy," "negativity" a condition to be avoided at all costs. Feminism and ecology are supposedly "roots" of the New Age scene, but likewise were militant workers a "root" of the Nazi movement (National Socialist German Workers Party, remember). Which brings to mind the chief New Age influence, Carl Jung. It is unknown or irrelevant to "non-judgmental" bliss-seekers that in his attempt to resurrect all the old faiths and myths, Jung was less a psychologist than a figure of theology and reaction. Further, as president of the International Society for Psychotherapy from 1933 to 1939, he presided over its Nazified German section and co-edited the *Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie* (with M.H. Goring, cousin of the Reichsmarschall of the same name).

Still gathering steam, apparently, since the appearance of Otto Kernberg's *Borderline Conditions and Pathological Narcissism* (1975) and *The Culture of Narcissism* by Christopher Lasch (1978), is the idea that "narcissistic personality disorders" are the epitome of what is happening to all of us, and represent the "underlying character structure" of our age. Narcissus, the image of self-love and a growing demand for fulfillment, has replaced Oedipus, with its components of guilt and repression, as the myth of our time—a shift proclaimed and adopted far beyond the Freudian community.

In passing, it is noteworthy that this change, underway since the '60s, seems to connect more with the Human Potential



search for self-development than with New Age, whose devotees take their desires less seriously. Common New Age nostrums, e.g. "You are infinitely creative," "You have unlimited potential," smack of a vague wish-fulfillment, sanitized against anger, by those who doubt their own capacities for change and growth. Though the concept of narcissism is somewhat elusive, clinically and socially, it is often expressed in a demanding, aggressive way that frightens various partisans of traditional authority. The Human Potential preoccupation with "getting in touch with one's feelings," it must be added, was not nearly as strongly self-affirming as narcissism is, where feelings—chiefly anger—are more powerful than those that need to be searched for.

Lasch's *Culture of Narcissism* remains extremely influential as a social analysis of the transition from Oedipus to Narcissus, given great currency and publicity by those who lament this turning away from internalized sacrifice and respect for authority. The "new leftist" Lasch proved himself a strict Freudian and an overtly conservative one at that, looking back nostalgically at the days of the authoritarian conscience based on strong parental and social discipline. There is no trace of refusal in Lasch's work, which embraces the existing repressive order as the only available morality. Similar to his sour rejection of the "impulse-ridden" narcissistic personality is Neil Postman's *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (1985). Postman moralizes about the decline of political discourse, no longer "serious" but "shriveled and absurd," a condition caused by the widespread attitude that "amusement and pleasure" take precedence over "serious public involvement." Sennett and Bookchin can be mentioned as two other erstwhile radicals who see the narcissistic withdrawal from the present political framework as anything but positive or subversive. But even an orthodox Freudian like Russell Jacoby (Telos, Summer 1980) recognized that in the corrosion of sacrifice, "narcissism harbors a protest in the name of individual health and happiness," and Gilles Lipovetsky considered narcissism in France to have been born during the May, 1968 uprisings.

Thus narcissism is more than just the location of desire in the self, or the equally ubiquitous necessity to maintain feelings of self-identity and self-esteem. There are more and more "narcissistically troubled" people, products of the lovelessness and extreme alienation of modern divided society, and its cultural and spiritual impoverishment. Deep feelings of emptiness characterize the narcissist, coupled with a boundless rage, often

just under the surface, at the sense of dependency felt because of dominated life, and the hollowness of one starved by a deficient reality.

Freudian theory attributes the common trait of defiance to an immature "clinging to anal eroticism," while ignoring society, just as Lasch expresses his fear of narcissistic "resentment and insubordination" in a parallel defense of oppressive existence. The angry longing for autonomy and self-worth brings to mind another clash of values that relates to value itself. In each of us lives a narcissist who wants to be loved for himself or herself and not for his or her abilities, or even qualities. Value per se, intrinsic—a dangerously anti-instrumental, anti-capital orientation. To a Freudian therapist like Arnold Rothstein, this "expectation that the world should gratify him just because he wishes it" is repugnant. He prescribes lengthy psychoanalysis which will ultimately permit an acceptance of "the relative passivity, helplessness, and vulnerability implicit in the human condition."

Others have seen in narcissism the hunger for a qualitatively different world. Norman O. Brown referred to its project of "loving union with the world," while the feminist Stephanie Engel has argued that "the call back to the memory of original narcissistic bliss pushes us toward a dream of the future." Marcuse saw narcissism as an essential element of utopian thought, a mythic structure celebrating and yearning for completeness.

The Psychological Society offers, of course, every variety of commodity, from clothes and cars to books and therapies, for every life-style, in a vain effort to assuage the prevailing appetite for authenticity. Debord was right in his counsel that the more we capitulate to a recognition of self in the dominant images of need, the less we understand our own existence and desires. The images society provides do not permit us to find ourselves at home there, and one sees instead a ravening, infuriating sense of denial and loss, which nominates "narcissism" as a subversive configuration of misery.

Two centuries ago Schiller spoke of the "wound" civilization has inflicted on modern humanity—division of labor. In announcing the age of "psychological man," Philip Rieff discerned a culture "in which technics is invading and conquering the last enemy—man's inner life, the psyche itself." In the specialist culture of our bureaucratic-industrial age, the reliance on experts to interpret and evaluate inner life is in itself the most malignant and invasive reach of division of

labor. As we have become more alien from our own experiences, which are processed, standardized, labeled, and subjected to hierarchical control, technology emerges as the power behind our misery and the main form of ideological domination. In fact, technology come to replace ideology. The force deforming us stands increasingly revealed, while illusions are ground away by the process of immiseration.

Lasch and others may resent and try to discount the demanding nature of the contemporary "psychological" spirit, but what is contested has clearly widened for a great many, even if the outcome is equally unclear. Thus the Psychological Society may be failing to deflect or even defer conflict by means of its favorite question, "Can one change?" The real question is whether the world-that-enforces-our-inability-to-change can be forced to change, and beyond recognition.

A's for Attitude

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other means. You may push a child out of the way. I don't see how any authority is involved with that. You don't need authority to educate a person either. Children don't fall into a different realm as other people. A parent's rationalization of their acts of authority thus begins to sound like all others.

The boss may give you a \$25 Christmas bonus while the rest of the year she or he supervises or capitalizes on your labor. Why should you be grateful for this little piece of cake? I don't pledge allegiance, nor do I feel any. A parent may allow their child to stay out after 11:00 once a week, but the rest of the week that is denied to them. Allegiance to those you are arbitrarily born to makes slightly more sense emotionally than allegiance to a country they are arbitrarily born into because at least parents are substantial people, and not merely a concept. But why ally yourself with those who control you?

Authority is often given to other relatives, surrogate or new parents, too. This authority is not one's to give either. It's up to the child to get fed up and take it back. It's up to us to show that it's possible.

A jack of all tirades

A review by Bob Black

Reinventing the Wheel...of Karma by Ed Lawrence (Bomb Shelter Props, POB 17686, Phoenix, AZ 85011, 1989) 112pp. \$6.50 paper.

Ed Lawrence speaks—and also listens—to whom it may concern, "to anyone interested in maintaining channels of communications as more than diversion ditches." Disinclined to chatter, he is by all indications writing not from the usual compulsions or careerism (he does construction work in rural Pennsylvania) but as an extreme retort to the extremity of the contemporary condition.

Appreciating as he does that "silence is the highest form of communication," when he does break silence he does it with an urgency which—as erudite, lyrical, playful or vulgar as he usually is—derives insurgency from emergency.

No mystic, Lawrence sets himself against what Reason has come down to in Western thought, "a standard which prunes every tree to the dimensions of a utility pole." Resistance may be vain but Lawrence is not.

Lawrence communicates several interlinked themes through a variety of forms. Originally a poet, he is additionally adept at the brief essay, at collage and at their interminglings which are so characteristic of his field of play, the marginals milieu rooted in xerography. Indeed Lawrence is among the makers of this now well interconnected milieu of posterists, anarchists, mail artists, absurdist, punks and other flotsam whose only point of central contact, perhaps, is the review zine **Fact-sheet Five**. His own material stands out there, and much of it would stand out, if other media could stand it, almost everywhere. Lawrence, one of whose perceptible influences is William Blake, gets much the same silent treatment. His book is largely textual but includes, as it absolutely had to, his memorable amphibians.

Lawrence has taken from Nietzsche, Camus, Karl Kraus, Blake, the anarchists—by now he qualifies as one, although he baffles their orthodox publications—but he's given back much more than he ever took with a decade long Potlatch. Verse, his original voice, is not heavily represented in this collection, but what there is has some throw weight. "Ice Tea Without Mercy" chillingly recounts a mercenary's reunion whose MIA's were lost not to enemy action but to the real enemy, ordinary life; coronaries, cars, swine flu, suicide. Another poem is unashamedly jingly doggerel denouncing judges, it'd make a magnificent rap song. In recent years the poetry has infused the prose, which is the better for it.

Lawrence's collages are representative of marginals' graphics but for their economy. As instantly recognizable as a John Crawford cartoon, a Lawrence collage is always lean and mean, with only the most sparing textual annotation. No slapdash mess of clip art and tabloid frenzy, a Lawrence collage may cover the same dark and bloody

ground but with precision and purpose. Any marginals collageist might veil Khomeini in a spacesuit and assign him an entourage of Klansmen. Only Lawrence would think to add the fortune-cookie caption, "Beware of enterprises that require new clothes." "Usurer Friendly" illustrates—in addition to the artist's pronounced punmanship—very literally, skull-duggery, "the inner face of capital's interface," what T.S. Eliot called the skull beneath the skin. Lawrence goes on to connect, with an umbilical cord, a baby to a Bunsen burner. He lets you seek out the hidden faces as Jack in the Beanstalk goes to Bitburg. Not to be neglected: "The Sexual Positions of a Ladder."

Lawrence is humane and so no humanist. Aghast at economics, his art is nonetheless economical. Apparently a freethinker, his sensibility for what for lack of a better word (we need one) might be called spiritual sets him as much against the secular humanists as the clerics. **In-spiration**, in-spiring, he calls what he feels, a breath of fresh air. He offers what I take to be, not a program, but an invitation to undo our programming:

"Our struggle is to work to restore a living, balanced, joyful environment where death provides the fertile ashes from which life springs anew and to oppose to it the dissected world where the thrashing contortions of prosthetic tentacles provide the only semblance of animation. To reject a world choking on blind fury in favor of one of vision which will be able to appreciate the delicate gradations as they play across the dawning sky."

Lawrence has seen the dawning sky, as he has seen the moon rise "like Lazarus from a cold bed." Like Goethe, he calls for more light. His multiplicity of methods accords with his perception of plural paths to the truth. His holism isn't hollow, Lawrence is no New Age grifter or Green recruiter. He is able and willing to get empirical as well as lyrical, as he does in several forays into revisionist scholarship. "The Transvaluation of Traditional Family Values" quotes chapter and verse to illustrate the aboriginal Christian antipathy to the family. Investigating a problem posed in Melville's *Redburn*, whether mankind shall stand or sit at the Last Judgment, Lawrence by Biblical hermeneutics elsewhere establishes that the Lord by afflicting sinners with hemorrhoids ensures "not only will seats be provided but that in so doing justice will be served in the end!"

The book is good enough to survive my saying it could have been better. There are too many typos and spelling errors. The graphics, originally letter size, in some cases suffer from reduction by 50%. Lawrence is a powerful writer but he occasionally overuses an image (like Allah's smile, the slit throat). His prose has sometimes an antebellum ponderousness perhaps derived from his favorites

Continued on page 8

NORTH AMERICAN ANARCHIST REVIEW

Number 2 Spring/Summer '90

Free!

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Having Little, Being Much
by Lorraine Perlman

Against Leviathan
by Fredy Perlman

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Fredy's songs

Being much Review by Lev

Having Little, Being Much; A Chronicle of Fredy Perlman's Fifty Years by Lorraine Perlman (Black & Red, POB 02374, Detroit, MI. 48202, 1989) 155pp. \$5.75 paper.

One of the more important radical theorists and visionaries of this century was the author of many books which have unfortunately not gotten the kind of attention they deserve...yet. But that situation will certainly change if we are going to see the growth of any sort of really effective movement for anarchic social change develop by the end of this century.

Fredy Perlman was the author of several essential books, as well as author, translator and/or publisher of other important works—along with his companion Lorraine and other friends who participated with him in various projects. His major works include *Manual for Revolutionary Leaders*, the fascinating novel *Letters of Insurgents*, and his exhaustive denunciation of the growth of civilization, *Against His-story, Against Leviathan*. At the time of his death in 1985 he was also working on an epic account of the habitation of the area around his adopted home—Detroit—from its earliest human habitation (and before!) to the fatal impact of its European conquest and its consequences. So far the first volume of this account has been completed by Lorraine Perlman and published as *The Strait*, with the promise of a possible second volume still to come.

With the publication of *Having Little, Being Much*, Lorraine Perlman's memoir of Fredy's years with her, those of us who have only admired and assimilated the man's written words can now learn a little bit more about his remarkable life. With care and respect Lorraine outlines many of the experiences, discussions, and explorations which he embodied in his prose. From descriptions of their travels in the U.S. and Europe, to accounts of the Black and Red Printing Co-op, to reports of their interactions with other Detroit dissidents (the *Fifth Estate*, etc.), she fills in many of the details which can round out our understanding of the life behind his texts.

There continues to be a huge need for memoirs of this type in the North American anarchist "community." This community has been stretched so thin (by repression and the ascendancy of authoritarian forms of radicalism from the time of the Russian Revolution) that the continuity of the movement has been lost. The fact that many people have made lifelong commitments to living as freely as possible, to exploring their visions and singing their songs, can be an inspiration for those who are now isolated, unsure of themselves and in need of living examples. This memoir will take its place alongside others like Emma Goldman's *Living My Life*, Paul Goodman's *Five Years*, Sam Dolgoff's *Fragments* and Kent Winslow's *Dream World* to help each of us to maintain the courage to sing our own songs. Available from: CH, BT, FE, SP, LB, LBD



Against His-story, Against Leviathan

[Review reprinted from the
New Anarchist Review]

Against His-story, Against Leviathan by Fredy Perlman (Black & Red, POB 02374, Detroit, MI. 48202, 1983) 302pp. \$6.95 paper.

"We are here as victims, or as spectators or as perpetrators of tortures, massacres, poisonings, manipulations, despoliations."

Thus does Fredy Perlman describe the wasteland which is our world in which everyday life confronts the public secret—that our "freedoms" leave us powerless, that our "civilization" is universal barbarism.

If the rise of civilization has been the systematic enslavement of humanity and the progressive destruction of nature, this process has matured into an ecological potential in which the parasite has the capacity to kill the host. One might say that "mankind" is killing "Mother Earth" except for the fact that there have always existed communities that do not commit acts of war against the biosphere. Free human communities have existed for thousands of generations, whilst civilization is a young Frankenstein's monster of at most two or three hundred generations. It is from this historical perspective, akin to Paul Goodman's "neolithic conservatism," that Perlman charts His-story.

Though the vision, insight and experience of these countless generations have been erased, it is still possible to see through the proponents of civilization when they tell us that "animals

lead happier lives in cages," and to know they are talking about us. The "Golden Age" is still described and dreamed of—it is "the state of nature," "primitive communism," "anarchy," "matriarchy."

The villain of the piece which Perlman seeks to expose is a life devouring monster, only the attributes of which have been understood by Marxists and anarchists. This monster is driven on its crusade against "the wilderness" by the "Western Spirit," it is a conquistador for civilization against free life in all its forms. Within a narrative which confidently weaves its way relentlessly through His-story, Perlman's task of describing the body of the beast is undertaken.

Our epic tale begins in the birthplace of our civilization, the Middle East, among communities up against the hard land misnamed "the Fertile Crescent." Their struggle for survival gives birth to the Leviathan, by the permanent institution of emergency "austerity measures." This proved not to be a still-birth, though the monster is a dead thing, its body is given movement "zeks," the forced labor squads trapped within its body. Leviathan grows, but, dependent of its zeks, its progress is continually plagued by their withdrawal to new pastures and by resistance that throws it into decomposition. Unfortunately, dead things have powers humans lack and Leviathan, like a dismembered worm, can grow anew from its segments. Like the machine it is, Leviathan can be repaired, human communities, however, once dead stay dead.

Civilization's institutions are the segments of this worm and surplus product, the material content which can not exist outside its body, its entrails. Trade burgeons, being something people do to their enemies (to friends they give), as under the tutelage of Leviathan virtually everyone becomes everyone else's enemy.

Within His-story the only human element is the Resistance, the rest is Leviathanic progress. Resistance need not be explained or justified, it is a natural response by humans to dehumanization. Historically, those that shrug off Leviathan are faced with daunting tasks, they cannot return to the old communities long since murdered. They must start again, yet culture cannot regenerate overnight. They must face a new life camped amidst the monster's remnants, that can be reactivated by "any good mechanic," to set the zeks back in their "proper place." It is the great mystery of civilized life—the compulsive and compulsory reproduction of the monster.

In the modern world, having exterminated the communities of outsiders, our Technological Wonder is generating outsiders within itself, replacing zeks with machines, and creating pockets of internal exiles. Having consumed everyone and everything, leaving only itself for reference, Leviathan entertains itself, exploits itself, wars on itself. It has nothing left to progress against except itself. Available from: LBD

The Continuing Appeal of Nationalism

[Review reprinted from the
New Anarchist Review]

The Continuing Appeal of Nationalism by Fredy Perlman (Black & Red, POB 02374, Detroit, MI. 48202, 1985) 58pp. \$2.75 paper.

After *Against His-story, Against Leviathan*, this book is something of a relief. *Against His-story* had me floundering to follow the strands of plausibility through the elaborate metaphors and patches of encyclopedic details. *The Continuing Appeal of Nationalism* thankfully returns to a more familiar and "traditional" polemic style while continuing to develop Perlman's theory of the relationship between capital and state.

This project was initiated with the spoof *Manual for Revolutionary Leaders* and given impetus by the disturbing response to that book—a large number of requests for which seemed to be from aspiring state-builders who took the title seriously.

Perlman sees nationalism not as force opposed to imperialism, but as its internal equivalent for the nation-state. The core of his thesis is derived from the work of an early Soviet economist, Proebrazhensky, on "primitive accumulation." What Marx saw as the initial phase of capitalist development, the crude plunder of resources, is rather a recurrent feature of the capitalist process.

The system of regular and expected profits which is prone to endemic crisis as described by Marx, is supple-

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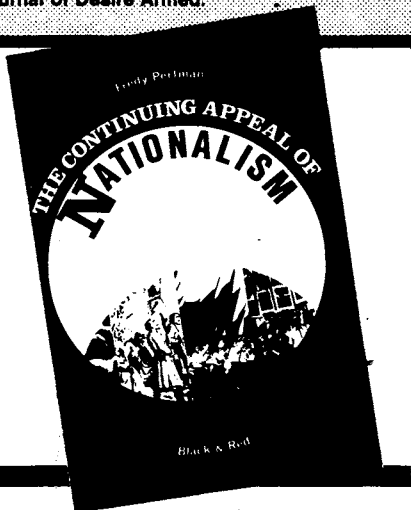
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mented and rejuvenated by the wind-falls and forward leaps provided by primitive accumulation.

In this way genocide becomes not an aberration, but a prerequisite of progress, and the slaughter of American Indians, the gassing of European Jews and Stalin's terror all become part of a common process of capital funding its further progress.

Nationalism and racism are the ideological products of capitalism which oil the wheels and define the parasites that need to be exterminated to enable primitive accumulation to take place. National liberation offers an escape route for the persecuted, an "applied science" which can transform them into persecutors.

In comparison to libertarian socialist interpretations, Perlman's book has more in common with the traditional anarchist "a plague on both your houses" approach to history. *National-*

ism is not without elegance—it is well argued and easily followed, however Perlman's weakness is the strength of the negative. As with *Against His-story*, history and its iniquities are explained but the process lacks that extra dimension to provide a dialectical perspective that would bring the picture more to life—a positive side, the stores of potential within the process that make our struggle more than just revenge for past genocide. Available from: LBD

The Reproduction of Daily Life

[From the *New Anarchist Review*]

The Reproduction of Daily Life by Fredy Perlman (Black & Red, POB 02374, Detroit, MI. 48202, 1969) 24pp. \$1.75 pamphlet.

The task of capitalist ideology is to maintain the veil which keeps people from seeing that their own activities reproduce the form of their daily life; the task of critical theory is to unveil the activities of daily life, to render them transparent, to make the reproduction of the social form of capitalist activity visible within people's daily activities. With this aim in mind, this essay sets out to elucidate the mechanisms by which human beings reproduce the conditions of their own immiseration. In a readable and comprehensive manner Fredy deals with the alienation of living activity, fetishism of commodities, the transformation of living activities into capital, the accumulation of human activity, culminating in the realization that "men who were much but had little, now have much but are little." Available from: LBD

Revolt in Socialist Yugoslavia

[From the *New Anarchist Review*]

Revolt in Socialist Yugoslavia by Fredy Perlman (Black & Red, POB 02374, Detroit, MI. 48202) 23pp. \$2.75 pamphlet.

This is an essay dealing with the events of June '68 which exposed the gap between the official ideology of "Workers Self-Management" and the social relations it claimed to describe, using original sources documenting the events. It also records how, when the students began to organize themselves in demonstrations and general assemblies, the regime which proclaimed self-management responded to this example of popular self-organization by putting an end to it through police and press repression. Available from: LBD

The Incoherence of the Intellectual

[From the *New Anarchist Review*]

The Incoherence of the Intellectual by Fredy Perlman (Black & Red, POB 02374, Detroit, MI. 48202) 117pp. \$3.70 paper.

A great part of Fredy's theoretical and practical struggle was an investigation of the process of alienation and fragmentation by which human beings surrender their autonomy and participate in their own suppression. It is thus appropriate that he should have provided this constructive critique of C. Wright Mills' work. If Mills did not provide any solutions he at least raised questions that Fredy was to return to again and again—

questions about the relation of the individual to history, about the relevance of intellectual activity to the making of history, and about the unity of thought and action. Available from: LBD



Letters of Insurgents

Review by Lev

Letters of Insurgents by Fredy Perlman [written under the names of S. Nachalo & Y. Vocheh] (Black & Red, POB 02374, Detroit, MI. 48202) 831pp. \$12.95 paper.

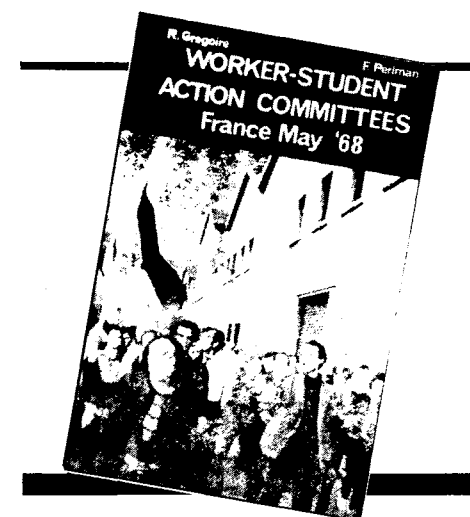
Told through a series of long letters, this is an intricately woven and incredibly absorbing tale of the lives of two Eastern European radicals who played quite different parts in an insurrectionary period during their youths. Their rediscovery of each other across continents helps them to uncover some of the hidden meanings of their own past and present "radicalism." I can't recommend this novel highly enough. It should be read by anyone serious about examining the nature of recuperation, as well as anyone interested in good, complex—yet readable—fiction. Available from: LBD

Worker-Student Action Committees: France May '68

[From the *New Anarchist Review*]

Worker-Student Action Committees: France May '68 by R. Gregoire & Fredy Perlman (Black & Red, POB 02374, Detroit, MI. 48202) 96pp. \$3.75 pamphlet.

This booklet is divided into two parts. The first part consists of articles which are attempts to understand the events as they took place and to define the perspectives behind the actions...The second part...is a critical evaluation of our actions and perspectives; it is an attempt to answer why our actions did not lead to the realization of our perspectives... Why did the escalation of the movement reach a certain point and go no further?" [From the Introduction] Available from: LBD



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How Deep is Deep Ecology?

Review by Lev

How Deep is Deep Ecology? by George Bradford (Times Change Press, Box 1380, Ojai, CA. 93023, 1989) 86pp. \$5.50 paper.

There is a great need to understand the historical context and underlying institutional basis for the current world ecological crisis. For too long too many environmental activists have been content to mouth the platitudes of conventional political wisdom—a sure method for avoiding the real problems and the real solutions to the massive ecological destruction from the rainforests of Brazil to the toxic atmosphere and concrete landscape of Los Angeles.

"Deep ecology" is one response to the shallowness of the environmental movement of the last 20 years. It has found a growing popularity amongst those who want to do more than just slow down the expansion of megatechnic civilization. Unfortunately, though, deep ecology itself has grown out of a fairly unsophisticated and shallow philosophical tradition. This situation has left it unequipped to face the stark realities of industrialism and capitalism in an era of mass indoctrination and the continued disintegration of the few still-living shreds of human community.

In *How Deep is Deep Ecology?* Fifth Estate writer George Bradford analyzes the amorphous mix of insights and mystifications which make up the body of deep ecology, applying a badly needed radical/critical perspective gained over many years of commitment and involvement in anarchist/anti-authoritarian activities in North America. As Bradford says:

"Now that George Bush has declared himself an environmentalist and *Time* magazine has named this plundered Earth 'planet of the year,'... The insights of ecology have been debased to everyday clichés while the actual plunder and poisoning are accelerating. The environmental movement itself has to a great degree been integrated as a kind of corrective mechanism into the operational logic of the industrial-capitalist machine presently strip-mining the biosphere. This is because the environmentalists have focussed not on the root-causes of ecological destruction but on the symptoms."

In his essay on deep ecology and the related essay which follows it in this book on "Women's Freedom: Key to the Population Question," Bradford delves into some of the most problematic areas of deep ecological thinking and practice. In doing so, he (along with other anarchist writers) has opened a dialogue with deep ecologists which still continues in the pages of the *Fifth Estate* and other periodicals. The challenges he has presented are essential points that anyone interested in radical perspectives on the ecological crisis will have to come to terms with, lest they see their "radicalism" evaporate into the toxic swamp of politics-as-usual. Available from: CH, BT, FE, SP, LB, LBD

Situationist ideas for kids!

Reviews by Boog

Cities of Illusion, The Spectacle: The Skeleton Keys, The Bad Old Days Will End, and Revolutionary Self-Theory (Spectacular Times, Box 99, Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX England) pamphlets/various prices.

Finally somebody has managed to present situationist ideas in words that regular people can understand instead of the usual impenetrable French-intellectual mumbo jumbo. As these pamphlets demonstrate, the ideas of the situationists are very powerful but they can still be expressed without using lots of twenty-dollar words that nobody and her mother really understand.

The crux of the biscuit for situationists is **the spectacle**—that shadow world of illusions created by modern capitalism where images become more real than the things they represent and we are all reduced to sitting in the peanut gallery watching somebody else's dreams. The idea is that "capitalism has made all social relationships into commodity relationships," that we have been reduced to being mere spectators of our own lives, that "every day we are denied an authentic existence and sold back its representation."

Situationist theory provides probably the clearest explanation of the reasons for the failure of traditional forms of political action in advanced capitalist countries. The spectacle is capable

of absorbing almost any form of opposition: any signs of authentic protest and rebellion are seized upon by the mass media & their image is represented on TV and in newspapers and in magazines and soon its symbols are used to sell mass-marketed commodities. The hippie subculture in America quickly generated whole new industries of beads, bongos, blacklights, and hash pipes so that anybody could be a weekend hippie—for a price. Similarly the punk scene in England quickly spawned boutiques full of designer safety pins & pre-ripped clothes. This creates an illusion of great freedom for most people, but "in the society of the spectacle you can't see the bars until you try to get out." But the situationist critique is not a philosophy of hopelessness—on the contrary. It rejects nihilism because "the nihilist does not realize that there are other people who are also nihilists." The situationists see that **"the material preconditions for social liberation already exist!"** and that the arena for real social change is in our everyday lives. The revolution will not be televised. "Revolution is a process—and it is a process that can be started now."

Cities of Illusion, The Spectacle, and The Bad Old Days Will End are collages of quotes from situationist writers, clippings from newspapers,

and comics all tied together with Larry Law's clear, straightforward presentation of these ideas. The prose is almost telegraphic—nothing extra and no bullshit, but nothing is left out. *Revolutionary Self-Theory* is a partly rewritten version of the pamphlet *Self-Theory: The Pleasure of Thinking for Yourself*, first published as an issue of **The Spectacle** (East Lansing, MI.) in 1975. I miss the Ned Hanley drawings from the original, but that's OK because instead this issue is illustrated with lots of incisive artifacts from spectacular culture, such as a Union Carbide ad that promises, "Today, something we do will touch your life." That's what I was afraid of....

But the goal of situationist theory is not just to create a chic cynicism about the meaninglessness of our lives and the power of the spectacle—the goal is to begin to **change** those things. Like Larry Law says in *Cities of Illusion*:

"We must start to build the world that we want now—in our relationships, our interactions and interventions, and in the way we conduct ourselves in our daily lives.... It is not enough to analyze the misery of daily life and its causes, we must speak of our dreams and desires and provide examples of life as it could be." Available from: CH, BT, FE, SP, LB, LBD

Rants & Incendiary Tracts

Reviewed by Bill Blank

Rants and Incendiary Tracts, edited by Adam Parfrey and Bob Black (Amok Press, POB 51, Cooper Station, New York, N.Y. 10276, 1989) \$9.95 paper.

This historical compilation (from 1558-1988) of demented declarations and desecrations reads like a wild graveyard party with laughs and severed heads for everyone. Bob Black, the classic controversial nihilist, reveals the intended theme in his own essay, "The correct line: Use the power of absurdity to expose the absurdity of power." The rants are quite educational and sometimes shocking; if not always for content, then for style. Quipsters Black and Adam Parfrey have taken great pains to at least show why acerbic writing is a fascinating yet neglected form of communication through these primarily obscure derisions (from well-known authors like Marquis de Sade or Kathy Acker to anonymous malcontents).

This snarling assortment is not a bad supplement to, say, Zinn's *A People's History of the United States*, as American references and authors predominate. Unfortunately, so do male ranters. Three women out of 60 is disappointing regardless of your politics. The "S.C.U.M. Manifesto" by Valerie Solanas, the sole member of the Society for Cutting Up Men who once shot up Andy Warhol (with a handgun), gives an incredibly hilarious rant despite its seriousness. Surely men don't have the corner on scathing satire or even unintentional humor.

Black defines ranters as insistently illuminating radicals (left, right, and broken-wing, like the late young rebel, Gerry Reith) who "care so much that they don't care if nobody else cares." The chronological order does make sense but it's frequently aided by clever and witty introductions (usually Black's), and the punchline is often not what is spouted but who spouts it (as in acid-flake Timothy Leary's "P.O.W. Statement" or Wilhelm Reich's 1945 verbal lashing, "Listen, Little Man!"). Thus the inclusion of the feverish whining by the Ayatollah Khomeini and the hysterical "Meese Commission Report on Pornography," and the attempted balance act between a stupid 1937 Nazi rap from Louis-Ferdinand Celine with an equally dumb (but not as tiresome) 1971 Zionist decree from the Rabbi Meir Kahane.

As a greatest hits package, this book remains a valuable exposure, unearthing important documents from de Sade to anarchists like the condemned Haymarket scapegoat Louis Lingg, from anarcho-futurists like A.L. & V.L. Gordin (from Russia in 1917) to modern iconoclasts like Ed Lawrence and Reith. However, the reader may also feel a bit cold and detached, as if form really is more important than content—a bad side-affect already force fed to us by the endless supply of speech writers for the ruling elite. Recommended, despite the mixed message of the editors' howling intentions. Available from: LBD

NORTH AMERICAN ANARCHIST REVIEW

Spring/Summer 1990
Press run: 7,000

North American Anarchist Review is a semi-annual tabloid primarily intended to let the libertarian community know about interesting new (and old) books, journals and publishers. This issue of NAAR has been published as a periodical on its own, and also as an insert to *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed* #25—although editorially it is independent from that journal.

Since NAAR is largely intended as a service to publishers, distributors and bookstores, it will be financed largely by advertising from these areas—if it is to be successful. Single copies are intended for free direct distribution, or for an SASE by mail.

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The third (Fall/Winter '90) issue of NAAR will have a press run of at least 7,000 total, and will also be 8 pages. All deadlines for that issue will be August 15th for publication in September.

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The Anarchist Way to Socialism

Review by Toni Otter

The Anarchist Way to Socialism by Marie Fleming (Rowman and Littlefield, Totowa, NJ, 1979) 299pp. hardcover.

Elisée Reclus, 1830-1905, was a French geographer of international reputation and an anarchist. Marie Fleming, a professor of political science at the University of Western Ontario, has done excellent primary research and her biography is strongest when she allows the facts of Reclus' life to speak for themselves. The book is less effective when Fleming infuses her own commentary. Biographers unavoidably project their biases into their work. My major criticism of Fleming's book is not because she is biased but because my biases differ from hers.

Fleming is honest enough in the preface:

"My contention is that up to 1871 Reclus was approaching a position in which he was prepared for at least temporary accommodation to the bourgeois order, even that he was coming to a more permanent support of parliamentary institutions. I shall

argue that he was beginning to see that the 'battle for democracy' might be won through outwitting the liberals in their own arena, and that these options were abruptly closed with his emotional and intellectual revulsion following the savage repression of the Paris Commune. In short, his bitter hostility towards the bourgeois state and his rejection of all party-political activity developed from 1871. Herein lies the tragedy as I see it. Reclus, who had an uncanny sense of the power of the people...also developed a political theory which denied them access to a set of institutions through which they might achieve real political gains." (p.12)

By book's end I'm extremely weary of Fleming's slant on things, which distorts and trivializes anarchy:

"The immediate decentralization of decision-making within revolutionary organizations, which was demanded by many socialists, was carried to its logical conclusion by the anarchists—the abandonment of all organization." (p.272)

On the same page she states that Reclus became "authoritarian" in his "anti-authoritarianism," which is quite possible, but one suspects Fleming's bias for party politics and electoralism heavily influences her judgment.

Fleming goes on to compare anarchism to religion:

"...was there much difference, after all, between Christianity which failed to provide the daily bread and anarchism which promised it in the indefinite future?" (p.273)

Granted, any theory may become a dogma, and Reclus' anarchism, and Fleming's parliamentary socialism, have not yet triumphed over modern industrialism, but the preceding statement is fairly meaningless to me except to support her editorial position. Fleming's understanding of anarchism seemingly allows her to forget that Reclus championed the option of the oppressed to combat the rich whenever possible, whether personally via attentat and theft of bread, or collectively. True, Reclus' encouragement of individual and cooperative effort did not include the bourgeois ballot, but Reclus did support direct democracy and action.

Fleming further critiques Reclus for his abstention from electoral politics:

"Far better to have socialists participating in party politics who are aware of the hazards of the parliamentary arena than those who are not... He was poignant in his critique of parliamentary socialism, and his remarks on a phenomenon which we have come to know as 'Bolshevism' were truly prophetic. His central message, the importance of consciousness in the revolutionary struggle, is as vital now as it was then... However, it is important to see that a consciousness outside an organizational framework is ineffectual in the battle for social justice." (p.274)

One notes here Fleming's regard for an anarchist who, were he alive today, might well have a different notion of "organizational framework" than Fleming, just as he did 100 years ago.

Having indicated Fleming's bias, I

would not discourage reading the book. Reclus shines through Fleming's disagreements with him, and his life was an interesting one. The debates among anarchists of the late 1800s, which Fleming covers in detail, make for stimulating reading.

In 1871 Reclus experienced the euphoria of the early Paris Commune and also the Commune's errors:

"Then came the elections, the members of the Commune were named—and then little by little the order of devotion and the desire for action were extinguished. Everyone returned to his usual task, saying to himself, 'Now we have an honest government, let it act for us.'" (p.111)

And again:

"If the citizens had been inspired by a common will for social renovation, they would have imposed it upon their delegates, but they had only the pre-occupation with defence: to fight well and to die well." (p.109)

As Fleming points out, the reactionary sentiment in areas outside Paris and the French army also overpowered the Commune, so internal weakness was not the only reason for its

defeat. Nevertheless, Reclus held the Communards responsible for their mistakes. After the failure of the Commune Reclus fled to Switzerland and worked with renewed ardor, and sometimes depression, to increase the awareness he felt necessary for a global commune.

Fleming portrays Reclus' positions on issues of the day, by roughly 1879, as overly rigid. Reclus was, according to Fleming, unrealistically critical of cooperatives, trade unions, and education-for-change within the system. My view is simply that Fleming feels revolution is possible, however, regrettably, only through existing structures. Reclus felt these structures, by design, blocked social revolution and did not avoid the necessary conclusions.

If Fleming had debated Reclus less, the biography might have been better. In general, if one is alert for Fleming's bias, she has written a well-documented, absorbing account of a relatively obscure anarchist who greatly influenced the freedom movement. Available from: SP, CAL

(Fleming's book has been republished by Black Rose under the title *The Geography of Freedom*.)

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"In societies where modern conditions of production prevail all of life presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. Everything that was directly lived has moved away into a representation." (From the text) Along with *The Revolution of Everyday Life*, this is one of the two major texts to come out of the Situationist International. No one can claim to understand modern history who has not grappled with the central thesis of this book. 221pp./\$4.50

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The Anarchist Way to Socialism by Marie Fleming

A study of the life and influence of the important French anarchist and geographer Elisée Reclus. 299pp./\$8.00 hardcover [limited supply]

Beyond the real

By Morgan Feralchilde

Arsenal; Surrealist Subversion #4 edited by Franklin Rosemont (Black Swan Press, 1726 West Jarvis Ave., Chicago, IL. 60626, undated) 224 pp. \$12.00 paper.

Surrealism has always remained an enigma in North America. For years, the term was exclusively tied to Salvador Dali and "dripping watches." Recently a spate of translations of French Surrealist novels by such writers as André Breton, Benjamin Peret and Lenora Carrington have appeared. But the political and social ideas of the Surrealist movement have been almost consistently ignored.

"Surrealism in the service of Revolution, poetry, the marvelous, dream, revolt, freedom, desire, wilderness and love," says the cover of *Arsenal*, and that describes the Surrealist program. Using both the rational and the "irrational" to subvert and overthrow the oppression that world civilization offers us—this is the complete Surrealism that has been hidden from Americans.

In 1966, in Chicago, a young group of radicals formed the first indigenous Surrealist group in the United States. Over the intervening 20 years, they have carried on the original Surrealist's project of total world subversion. *Arsenal*, a 225-page anthology/magazine/book, is the current publication of the Surrealist movement in the United States.

Arsenal contains entries from over 60 writers, poets and artists from 20 countries. Included are previously unpublished or untranslated works by such luminaries as film director Louis Buñuel, artist Marcel Duchamp and revolutionary theorists Herbert Marcuse and C.L.R. James. The book is a staggering collection of poems and polemics, anthropological essays,

book reviews, stories and interviews.

Special attention is paid in this issue to Surrealist women and Surrealism and women. In the lead article, "Surrealism and Women," poet Nancy Joyce Peters points out, "the first Surrealists aimed to reorient thought—and that new orientation, although never feminist, has prophetic parallels with contemporary feminist concerns."

A major section of *Arsenal* is a tribute to Mary Low, one of the few Surrealists left from the 1930s. In addition to the inclusion of several of Low's artistic pieces, there is a lengthy discussion of her participation in the Spanish Civil War. Her book, *Red Spanish Notebooks*, is a classic description of the radical transformation of Spanish society by workers and peasants, and their betrayal by the Spanish Communists and the Stalinist International Brigades.

Also of interest is a collection of letters and essays by New Left thinker Herbert Marcuse. Evidently, Marcuse felt an affinity with Surrealism and corresponded extensively with the Chicago Surrealists. These writings, never before published, shed more light upon Marcuse's thought on art and the radical transformation of society.

If there is a weakness to *Arsenal*, it is on the Surrealists of today. The Surrealists today seem to lack the degree of verve, humor and vitality that appears in the works of the Surrealists of the '20s and '30s. While I've heard rumors of the wildness of the Chicago Surrealists, little shows in print. On top of that, the design follows the design of the original Surrealist magazine.

Continued on page 8

A journal of Desire Armed

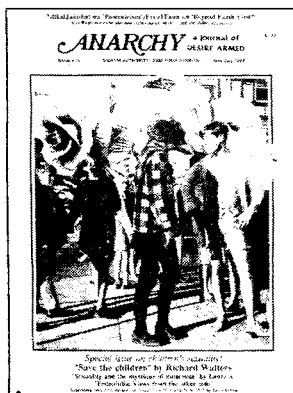
Tired of being told what to do, how to feel, and what to think? Discover and explore the world of anarchy. We don't claim to have any final "answers" to the question of how we can create a genuinely free and satisfying social world, but we'd like to search for them with you.

Anarchy is a journal of **desire armed**! Neither left nor right, we're just uncompromisingly anti-authoritarian. **Anarchy** refuses all ideology. We criticize all religion, all spiritualism, all moralism, all political ideology. We refuse to bow before the altars of "God" or the nation-state. We spit on nationalism, militarism, racism and hierarchy. We don't want to leave anything out. **Nothing** is sacred, least of all anarchy.

We want to create a genuinely different alternative vision--radically cooperative & communitarian, ecological and feminist, spontaneous and wild--a liberatory vision free from the constraints of our own human self-domestication.

Anarchy defends what little integrity still remains in our highly-alienated "brave new world." We defend the integrity of the individual. We encourage attempts to create and maintain genuine community, not for the sake of repressive ulterior motives--money, God, morality--but solely for the sake of the pleasures we may find there. And most fundamentally, we defend the integrity of our desires. For if our own most intimate and inalienable desires cannot be trusted, why bother with living?

If you haven't already, please subscribe today!



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Anarchy #1 (4pp., xeroxed) [Jan. 1980] Contents include "Pigs will be pigs," and a short story, "Austria," by Badguy.

Anarchy #2 (4pp., xeroxed) [March 1980] Contents include "Drifting toward World War III" by Sea @.

Anarchy #6 (12pp., tabloid) [Aug. 1985] Contents include a story by William Cottrell titled "Mother Love," a section on "Native American News" and a reprint from the *Fifth Estate*, "Star Wars = 1st strike; U.S. plans Death Star."

Anarchy #7 (12pp., tabloid) [Sept. 1985] Contents include "South Africa: the resistance continues," "Pornography & female sexuality" by Diane Dekay, "Eros denied: a culture against untouchables" by Julian Noa, and "In defense of Young Lust" by Jay Kinney.

Anarchy #8 (12pp., tabloid) [Oct./Nov. 1985] Contents include "Julian Beck: a memory" by Badguy, "The daily battle" by Freddie Baer and "The abolition of work" by Bob Black.

Anarchy #9 (12pp., tabloid) [Dec. '85/Jan '86] Contents include "Foreign Policy," a tale by Gerry Reith, a discussion entitled "Cooperation is anarchy" and "The Plague (Central America)" by Julian Noa.

Anarchy #10 (12pp., tabloid) [Feb./March 1986] Contents include the first installment of "The Papalagi" by Tuiavii of Tiavea, the 1985/86 revision of the Columbia Anarchist League's *As we see it*, and "Story-box" by Jai.

Anarchy #11 (12pp., tabloid) [April 1986] Contents include "A history of the Anarchist Black Cross," "The Papalagi" (part 2); "The Federal Programme of the West German Greens--Part I," "The Badguy Report--The Club Dekrepit bust: two years after," "Ecology as ideology; *Ecological Politics and Bioregionalism*," a review by Lev Chernyi; and "Winning hearts and minds," a story by Gerry Reith.

Anarchy #12 (12pp., tabloid, plus the 12-page Summer '86 *The Gentle Anarchist* included as an insert) [Summer 1986] Contents include a report on the "Haymarket '86 anarchist gathering," "Radical movements confront apartheid in South Africa," "The Papalagi" (part 3), "Let us prey! Smash the state!" by Bob Black, and "Notes on playing for keeps" by Alf Sprack.

Anarchy #13 [Weekly World Anarchy issue] (20pp., tabloid) [Fall/Winter 1986] Contents include "The Papalagi" (part 4), "The bioregional vision--far-sighted or myopic?" by Lev Chernyi, "Theses on libertarian municipalism" by Murray Bookchin, "A summer place" by Kerry Thornley, and "Reagan's drug war" by Kurt Nimmo.

Anarchy #14 (28pp., tabloid) [Summer 1987] Contents include "Anarchy in Greece," "The Papalagi" (part 5), "Vagaries of negation" by John Zerzan, a review of "Noam Chomsky's *Turning the Tide*" by Lev Chernyi, "Intervening in Vietnam and Central America: Parallels and differences" by Noam Chomsky, and "Harmonica Vengeance" by Lev Chernyi.

Anarchy #15 (32pp., tabloid) [Winter 1988] Contents include "Give chance a piece," "Propping up the cities: a review of Murray Bookchin's *The Rise of Urbanization and the Decline of Citizenship*" by John Zerzan, "Feyerabend's *Against Method*" reviewed by Larry Giddings, "The Papalagi" (part 6), "The realization and suppression of religion" by Ken Knabb, "Anarchy & religion: a dialogue" (including contributions from Fred Woodworth, Jay Kinney, and Lev Chernyi).

Anarchy #16 (32pp., tabloid) [Summer 1988] Contents include "Native American guerrillas in Colombia," "Rabl Rousers protest in Minneapolis," "Working Girls: A review" by Lev Chernyi, "The Papalagi" (part 7), "A note on biocentrism" by Lev Chernyi, "Realizing desire" by New Rage, "A boring night out, circa 1975" by Lev Chernyi, "My life in the porn biz" by Holly, "Pornography and pleasure" by Paula Webster, and "Anarchy & religion--the dialogue continues" (through letters).

Anarchy #17 (32pp., 10 1/2"x14 1/2"/stitched) [Fall/Winter 1988/89] Contents include "Stumps Suck! on the Okanagan" by Mikal Jakubal, "Notes from the California Earth First! Rendezvous" by Lev Chernyi, "Chaos and anarchy" by Kansas Slim, "The Papalagi" (part 8), "The point of no return for everybody" (a review of John Zerzan's *Elements of Refusal* and John Zerzan & Alice Carnes' *Questioning Technology*) by Lev Chernyi, "Who killed Ned Ludd?" by John Zerzan, "The freedom of biocentrism: a poem" by Lone Wolf Circles, "If nature abhors ideologies...biocentrism is no exception" by Lev Chernyi, "Anarchy & religion--the dialogue continues" (including "The quest for the spiritual" by Feral Faun, "Ten theses toward the end of the flesh-spirit dichotomy" by Feral Ranter, and more letters), and the first installment of "The nihilist's dictionary" (on "Niceism") by John Zerzan.

Anarchy #18 (32pp., 10 1/2"x14 1/2"/stitched) [March/April 1989] Contents include a "Report on the Oct. 17th Pentagon action" by Paul Simons; reviews of Jeremy Rifkin's *Time Wars* by Maria Mitchell, Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall's *Agents of Repression* by Toni Otter, and Kent Winslow's *Dream World* by Lev Chernyi; "Current controversies concerning the annual continental anarchist gatherings" by Lev Chernyi; "The Papalagi" (part 9); an excerpt from "Bigger cages, longer chains" by Spectacular Times; "An introduction to critical theory" by Lev Chernyi; two reactions to the Toronto anarchist gathering's "Day of Action"; a continuing discussion of "Biocentrism vs. the critique of ideology" between Feral Faun, Lone Wolf Circles, and Lev Chernyi; a continuing discussion on anarchy and religion; columns including "On unions" by interrogations, "The nihilist's dictionary" (on "Technology") by John Zerzan, "A's for attitude," and "The return of the Badguy report."

Anarchy #19 (32pp., 10 1/2"x14 1/2"/stitched) [May-July 1989] Contents include a "Report on the April N.O.W. March in D.C." by Melen Lunn; "The Economic Movement and the Polish opposition" by John Barrett; "Taking the low road to High Weirdness," a review by Bob Black; "The Korean anarchists," a review by Toni Otter; "Another Heresy" survey results; "The Papalagi" (part 10); "Pedophilia: Views from the other side"--including "I was fifteen, she was forty-three" by Chris Bearchell and "Girl Love" (anonymous); "Liberating sexuality," reviews of Richard Walters' *Sexual Friendship* and Will McBride & Helga Fleischhauer-Hardt's *Show Me!* by Lev Chernyi; "Sexuality and the mystique of innocence" by Laure A.; "Save the children" by Richard Walters; "Biocentrism: ideology against nature" by Mikal Jakubal; "Beyond Earth First!" by Feral Faun; columns including "The Badguy Report," "Nation, state...or human community" by interrogations, "Feral Revolution" by Feral Faun, "A's for Attitude," and "The Nihilist's Dictionary" by John Zerzan on "Culture."

Anarchy #20/21 Double issue (48pp., 10 1/2"x14 1/2"/stitched) [Aug.-October 1989] Contents include "Clean, sober & obedient; Behind the anti-drug witch-hunt" by Jack Straw, "On Afghanistan" by A. Trotter, "People's Park riot in Berkeley; What really happened on May 19th" reprinted from *Sling-shot*, Alison Gross' review of *Remember Love*, a review of Errol Morris' "The Thin Blue Line," "Venezuela in the streets! Letter from a Venezuelan anarchist," "An open letter about the Toronto gathering demonstration and demonstrations in general" by Feral Faun, the final installment of "The Papalagi" entitled "The Papalagi want to drag us down into their darkness," "To have done with the economy of love" by Feral Faun, "Whatever happened to the sexual revolution" by Richard Walters, "Monogamy or non-monogamy? A discussion," a story by Laurie Ulster entitled "I'll Remember You," the newly revised version of "As we see it!" by the Columbia Anarchist League, Toni Otter's review of *Erotic by Nature* and a reprint of Dreaminhawk's story "The Pink Scarf" from that book, "Jealousy" by Isaac Cronin, Kevin Keating's story "The Man in the Box," and columns including "John Zerzan's 'The Nihilist's Dictionary' on 'Feral,' Mikal Jakubal's 'Effects without a cause,' 'A's for Attitude' on 'Emotional allegiance and demystification,' and 'The Badguy Report' on 'The primal in the creation of the everyday.'" [Note: this issue is double the price of other back issues]

Anarchy #22 (32pp., 10 1/2"x14 1/2"/stitched) [Nov./Dec. '89] Contents include "Without Borders 1989; Reports on the gathering and Day of Action," the first chapter of Raoul Vaneigem's *The Revolution of Everyday Life* on "The insignificant signified," "In search of the New Age; The infinite egress of you" by Janos Nehek, "Kid's Sexuality" by K@n@r@l@t@e, "In the wake of the Exxon Valdez; World capitalism and global ecocide" by Will Guest, columns including "The slut & the virgin" by A's for Attitude, "Whiter now?" by Feral Faun, and "On organization" by interrogations, as well as an insert of the first issue of *North American Anarchist Review*.

Anarchy #23 (36pp., 10 1/2"x14 1/2"/stitched) [Jan./Feb. '89] Contents include "An interview with a W. Berlin autonomist," "Seven theses on play" by Paul Simons, "The population myth" by Murray Bookchin, "Propaganda American-style" by Noam Chomsky, "Contradictions of cocaine capitalism" by Jefferson Morley, and the second chapter of Raoul Vaneigem's *The Revolution of Everyday Life* on "Humiliation," as well as our regular columns & 12+ pages of letters (including special sections on "anarchy & religion" and our "children's sexuality" issue).

Anarchy #24 (36pp., 10 1/2"x14 1/2"/stitched) [March-April '90] Contents include "At the Berlin Wall" by Laure A., "Stewart Home's assault on coherent theory and practice"--Lev Chernyi's review of *The Assault on Culture*, Hakim Bey's "Boycott cop culture!," the third chapter of Raoul Vaneigem's *Revolution of Everyday Life* on "Isolation," "Misinformation and manipulation: An anarchist critique of the politics of AIDS" by Joe Peacock, An exchange on "Anarchy and the sacred," Ben Price's "Talking to ourselves," and columns including "A's for Attitude," "The Nihilist Dictionary" on "Progress," and "The Iconoclast's Hammer" by Feral Faun, as well as 10+ pages of letters.

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Begin at Start

Reviewed by Boog

Begin at Start by Su Negrin (Times Change Press, Box 1380, Ojai, CA. 93023, 1972) 176pp. \$5.95 paper.

Su Negrin begins at start:

"*Begin at survival. Begin with our own unfreedom. Begin in our own daily lives. The personal is political because a change in the intimate power relationships of our everyday lives is necessary for a free world. The political is personal because we need the power to determine our own lives.*"

Begin at Start talks about personal liberation and world change and how they're connected, and does it in words that most people can understand. The book is abundantly illustrated with the author's personal experiences and thus unlike most books on political theory you can tell it was written by a human.

Negrin's main themes are that domination in human societies stems from scarcity and that daily life is the arena of real social change. Negrin is at her best when she argues the latter point, but most of her ideas on the liberatory potential of "post-scarcity" technology are borrowed from the early writings of Murray Bookchin. Although she expresses those ideas very directly and clearly they still sound naive and unconvincing. But, as she explains, "I anticipate the inevitability of utopia because I just can't picture the

death...of the planet. A free post-scarcity world is necessary." Amen.

Also, some of the discussion of sexual politics stuck in my craw, particularly the author's belief that heterosexual men are inherently oppressive and less than fully human, and her assertion that "women hosting fetuses in their uteruses...is not ecologically sound."

Although the personal experiences that Negrin relates provide abundant justification for her feelings about men, they're still frustrating for me. I put a lot of energy into trying to treat all the people I meet with love and respect and it's disappointing to hear

someone say it's not possible just because I have a penis. And although women clearly bear all the pain and most of the responsibility associated with childbirth, to claim that the natural process of human reproduction is not ecologically sound seems a little silly.

Despite a few obvious flaws, I wholeheartedly recommend reading this book. Su Negrin proclaims the desirability of questioning everything and goes on to do just that. A few parts of the book made me angry, but at least they made me think...and all of it made me feel. Available from: SP, LB, LBD, CAL

A jack of all tirades

Continued from page 9

Poe and Melville, and infrequently his wordplay gets so convoluted that he trips over his own coils. Always playful, thoughtful, funny and sincere, Lawrence is not always polished. His vendetta against the Founding Fathers is too vehement, undifferentiated and even superfluous, how many Americans today entertain even a fairytale version of their history? In my childhood, and a bit later Lawrence's, Walt Disney made patriotic icons of Davy Crockett and the Swamp Fox, but now patriotism is incarnated by vice cops and hit-men whose forte is flaunting the Constitution that Ed Lawrence takes for evidence of the hypocrisy of its slave-owning authors. An easy call 200 years later but for the Monday morning quarterback all the calls are easy. These eroding vestigial constitutional protections have saved me more than once, they may be good for nothing soon enough if the

Supreme Court carries on as before, but why accelerate the process? Ed Lawrence might reconsider if he got into trouble as often as I do.

Lawrence's book includes a thoughtful review of Camus' *Neither Victims nor Executioners*, which might well have been its title had that been untaken. His recoil with horror from homicide is all that might disqualify him as a revolutionary, for some cafe communists and armchair anarchists who are probably much more up for ordering executions than for themselves carrying them out. He asks no one to go any further than he's prepared to go himself, which is why he has outlasted countless apocalyptic apocalypses who fly in, one window and out the other like the sparrow which the Venerable Bede likened to fleeting human life. If most men lead lives of quiet desperation, Ed Lawrence leads a life of passionate tranquility, maybe as good a description as any of the way we'd like to live after attending to a few impediments like government, capitalism, Christianity and work. Why not give it a try?

Beyond the real

Continued from page 6

But that is only a small complaint compared to what *Arsenal* accomplishes. Given the general complacency of the so-called radical and progressive American movements, the Surrealists are real arse(nal)-kickers. While everyone else seems reconciled to the Democratic Party, God, the police, the new-improved Stalinism of Gorbachev, the New Age, and the thousand other variants of oppression, the Surrealists stand firm.

Remember, as a child, believing the world was a magical, enchanted place? That is what Surrealism wishes to recreate, for all people. Available from: LBD

Breaking Free

Review by Lev

Breaking Free by J. Daniels (Attack International, Box BM 6577, London WC1N 3XX, England, 1989) 174pp. \$5.00 paper.

In this book Tintin, the well-known comic character, has been hijacked and put to better use by J. Daniels in a story of radicalization and mass strike action in Britain leading to a general insurrection. The comics are all well-done. The story is plausible enough to stay interesting as the plot develops.

Unfortunately, Attack International has already been feeling heat for publishing this "unauthorized" edition of Tintin. So it remains to be seen just how long the book will remain available. Get your copy now before it's too late! Available from: BT, FE, SP, LB, LBD

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Over four years ago a small group of mostly British intellectuals who were keenly interested in research about anarchism founded the **Anarchist Research Group**. This group gathers several times a year to listen to papers given by members and to informally network in a time-honoured and frequently very fruitful fashion. Early on, the group decided to publish a newsletter or bulletin to link members of the group and share information related to anarchist research.

The *Bulletin of Anarchist Research* has been published for nearly four years. Issue 19 will emerge by the end of 1989. There are about 125 addresses and 50 periodicals throughout the world which are sent the BAR. Usually (know what I mean?), BAR is published quarterly. The length has settled at around 25 pages and it is filled with information, articles, reviews, announcements and nearly anything which is sent in by the reader/members. While not yet a "proper" journal, it has moved steadily upward in quality of layout and content, until it is now quite a useful little publication. BAR is not connected to any organised group, although it is published by the Anarchist Research Group. The U.K. sub is £4.00 for six issues (3.00 if you are extremely poor) and £6.00 for overseas airmail. Cheques must be made payable to *Bulletin of Anarchist Research* and **MUST BE IN STERLING**.

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Ecocide On the East Side

The environmental crisis in Eastern Europe

By Will Guest

The state-capitalist mode of accumulation which first arose in the Soviet Union and then spread, in the name of 'socialism,' to other parts of the world (China, Eastern Europe, Cuba, etc.), was adopted because of the very significant advantages centralized control provided the new class of capitalist bureaucrats. Not the least of these has been totalitarian political structures which have prevented the working class people in these countries from expressing any criticism of state-imposed heavy industrial development. People couldn't complain when they were moved off their lands and turned into industrial or agricultural workers. They also didn't dare respond to the signs of steadily worsening environmental conditions around their workplaces and homes. The state's controls on information and research made it impossible for people to know what was happening to the air, lands and waters outside of their own locales. Increasingly over time, however, the promised bounties of the industrial state were seen to have been so many lies, and the destruction of public and environmental health could no longer be tolerated in silence.

Over the last two decades information about environmental conditions within the state-capitalist sphere has slowly leaked out to the West. Now with *glasnost*, *perestroika* and the breakdown of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe the leaks have turned into a flood. Environmental destruction there is severe: massive air, water and soil pollution, radioactive contamination of food, mysterious epidemics affecting whole regions, dying lakes and rivers, extinctions of plants and animals, and all the other forms of ecocide we are familiar with from other parts of the world. People in the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and elsewhere in the region are organizing militant responses to damage and threats (in some cases much more militant than any that have ever occurred in the U.S.). Their militancy over environmental and health issues, in fact, is partly responsible for the major political changes taking place there today, and holds much liberatory potential for the future. They have seen through the industrial con act and won't be silent just because the new managers are German, Japanese or American. Here's a brief sampling of some of the worst environmental problems in Eastern Europe and how people have responded. You'd be militant too!

Life Goes On, or Death & Profits in the USSR

The explosion and fire at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the Ukraine in April 1986 sent more than seven tons of radioactive material into the atmosphere, contaminating land, water and food through much of Europe. In addition to the 31 people who died within the first 75 days and the 300 treated for intense radiation exposure, more than 135,000 people were evacuated from the surrounding area and 2,500 square kilometers of land became "officially" uninhabitable. Medical experts predict that tens of thousands of people will die prematurely of radiation-caused cancer.

Despite *glasnost* the Soviet authorities still closely restrict information about the aftereffects of the disaster; in April 1989 on the third anniversary of the meltdown the government issued strict curbs on press



Collage by Johann Humyn Being (San Francisco, CA.).

reporting of accidents at nuclear and conventional power plants. "The directive comes at a time when the government has been trying to promote the use of atomic energy amid the growth of an anti-nuclear movement born of fear that the full truth of Chernobyl is yet to be revealed." Last November thousands of people demonstrated in the streets of Minsk in Byelorussia demanding that a half-million people be evacuated from villages that are contaminated by radiation in the Gomel and Mogilyov regions. Similar demonstrations have taken place in the Ukraine, organized by the group Green World. In the Poleski district west of Chernobyl, residents, especially children, suffer from swollen thyroid glands, sluggishness, cataracts and a rise in cancer rates. Infants born there now exhibit increased congenital cataracts, impaired vision, lowered immunity, higher levels of anemia and myocardial infarction. The conditions in the Narodichi region southwest of Chernobyl are similar; Moscow officials "sometimes visit the area and then blame the health problems there on 'radio-phobia', the psychosomatic fear of radiation." Farm animals in the region, starting in 1987, are increasingly born with serious deformities: "calves without heads, limbs, ribs, eyes; pigs with abnormal skulls." Food grown in the large contaminated area, both meat and vegetable products, is sold all over the Soviet Union, much of it with radiation levels 10 times normal. (All quotes in this paragraph from *SF Chronicle*, Nov. 24, 1989 and Feb. 14, 1990).

Chernobyl of course was not the first nuclear accident to occur in the Soviet Union; it was merely the worst, and the first that was not covered up by the government (they tried but failed). Recently the

government admitted for the first time that an accident occurred in 1957 at a nuclear waste dump in the Ural Mountains, in which, according to the CIA (not necessarily a reliable source!), hundreds of people were killed and a 400-square-mile area was turned into a radioactive wasteland. Thirty villages were wiped off the map. Although finally admitting the explosion occurred and that 10,000 people were evacuated, the authorities insist that no one actually died (*SF Chronicle*, May 17, 1989).

As a result of their history and the prospects of more of the same in the future, Soviet citizens near (and not so near!) nuclear facilities live lives of constant and well-grounded fear. Not only of power plant and waste dump accidents; nuclear weapons testing has also caused militant demonstrations. Coal miners in Kazakhstan have threatened to strike to prevent nuclear tests at the Semipalatinsk test range (can you imagine that happening here?); spokespersons for their organization, Nevada-Semipalatinsk, say the people fear that the explosions "have contaminated the region, poisoning drinking water and food and increasing the incidence of cancer" (*SF Chronicle*, Oct. 6, 1989). The name of their group indicates that they view their problems from a global perspective.

Radiation poisoning is by no means the most widely threatening of the environmental problems in the USSR. Industrial pollution pervades the country. "Last year [1989], the Soviets identified 102 cities, with a total of 50 million residents, where maximum permissible levels of pollutants had been exceeded by 10 or more times. Even worse, 43 million Soviets lived in cities where such norms had been exceeded by 15 or more times" (*SF Chronicle*, Feb. 14,

1990). In December, 1987, *Pravda* stated that the industrial city of Ufa in the Ural Mountains, the capital of the Bashkir A.S.S.R., with a population of nearly one million, had become "barely suitable" for human habitation. Ufa is the site of more than 400 industrial enterprises, mostly chemical factories and oil refineries. Air pollution is several times above permissible levels and fruit and vegetables are grown in poisoned soils (*SF Chronicle*, Dec. 3, 1987).

The newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda* reported in 1988 "that thousands of families in the Khmel'nitskiy region of the Ukraine were issued military gas masks because emissions from the local meat combine had reached alarming levels" (*SF Chronicle*, Feb. 14, 1990). The free issue of masks was advertised as part of a long term program called "Life Goes On" (*SF Examiner*, Dec. 11, 1988).

A mysterious epidemic of baldness and neurological problems (hallucinations and extreme irritability) has struck more than 125 children in the western Ukraine; acid rain laced with the metallic element thallium, perhaps emitted by automobiles, is suspected as the cause (*SF Examiner*, Dec. 11, 1988).

Water pollution in the USSR is, if anything, even worse than air pollution. "In the Siberian city of Kemerovo, stray dogs that are not sent to research laboratories or converted into fur boots and hats are simply tossed into a lake filled with toxic phenols from a local chemical plant, the newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda* reported. 'After several days, no trace is left', the newspaper reported" (*SF Chronicle*, Feb. 11, 1989). In 1988 beaches along the Baltic and Black sea shores were declared unsanitary and off-limits due to industrial waste discharges and high concentrations of pathogenic organisms, including those carrying typhoid and dysentery (*SF Chronicle*, July 27, 1988).

Infant mortality in the Soviet Union is extremely high, averaging about 25 deaths per 1,000, similar to that of Panama. In Soviet central Asia the rate is 60 per 1,000 infants born, comparable to Guatemala or Cameroon. In the Karakalpak Autonomous Republic the rate is 111 per 1,000. "It is no accident that Karakalpak has the worst infant-mortality rate in the Soviet Union. This region, which has a population of 1.2 million...hugs the southern part of the Aral Sea. Soviet authorities have diverted its waters to irrigate the cotton fields of Uzbekistan, Turkmenia and Karakalpak. As a result, the sea has been shrinking and its pollutants have been condensed. The rivers that feed it...have been turned into little more than sewers. This contaminated water, often the only water for residents here, spreads infection and disease. Moreover, the chemical pesticides and defoliants used in cotton growing here are absorbed by the men and women who work the fields and are washed into the river water they drink" (*New York Times*, Aug. 14, 1989). Health officials in the republic report increases in intestinal illnesses among children and throat cancers in adults (*SF Examiner*, Sep. 25, 1988).

Beyond its health effects on the human population, the shrinkage of the Aral Sea from fourth-largest lake in the world to its current position as sixth-largest (and counting) has created a vast ecological disaster, typical of the kinds of multifaceted devastation created by industrial modes of production dedicated to capital accumulation. Native plant communities have been seriously damaged; shrubs and grasses have

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disappeared, leaving only desert. Salinity has increased in the lake waters, wiping out 20 of 24 native fish species. The desertification of the region has eliminated 135 of 173 native terrestrial animal species. Severe and huge salt and dust storms deposit salt (more than 47 million tons per year) over the surrounding agricultural areas, damaging crops and soil fertility. The regional climate has changed; summers are warmer, winters colder, and the growing season is shorter; some areas can no longer grow cotton as a result (SF Examiner, Sep. 25, 1988).

Environmental conditions across the country have developed into a crisis for the Soviet government. At a time when the Soviet Union's very survival as a state depends on the competitiveness of its national economy, the working population has been struck by "chronic disability, premature invalidism and death." Soviet authorities see the problem of the "underproductivity of an unhealthy workforce" resulting from ecological damage as the country's biggest problem (SF Chronicle, Feb. 14, 1990).

But the government's hands are tied; it cannot afford to install even the minimal kinds of environmental protections some parts of the West bloc employ. At the same time, the working people in the Soviet Union are mobilizing in defense of their homelands and waters. Demonstrations have reversed a planned nuclear power plant at Krasnodar near the Black Sea in the southern Russian S.F.S.R., and a huge chemical plant at Kazan, capital of the Tatar Autonomous Republic (SF Chronicle, Feb. 1, 1988).

When Latvians during their energetic pursuit of independence from the Soviet Union forced authorities to shut down a polluting pulp mill in the coastal city of Jurmala in January of this year, the government retaliated by refusing to supply newsprint from pulp mills elsewhere, effectively shutting down all three Latvian daily newspapers. The only dailies available in Latvia were the national *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, mouthpieces of factions of the central bureaucracy. "In all, according to a Latvian journalist, the cutoff of paper supplies will force about 30 newspapers to close, and 1,300 journalists will lose their jobs. Karlis Streips, an editor at the newspaper *Atmoda* in the Latvian capital of Riga, called Moscow's refusal to supply paper to Latvia indicative of how the Kremlin intends to treat the Baltic republics under the limited autonomy it has granted them" (SF Chronicle, Jan. 25, 1990). Such petty, even pathetic, forms of harassment won't stop the demonstrators. The State giveth and the State taketh away; so much for *glasnost*. But a growing part of the Soviet working class knows that what they really want—healthy lives in a healthy environment—the Industrial State can't provide.

Satellites Out of Orbit

The story, unfortunately, is much the same in the central and eastern European parts of the former Soviet empire. For some countries there is as yet relatively little information to go on, but what there is sounds familiar. For others, especially Poland, there is vast documentation of extreme environmental destruction. According to French scientist Jean-Pierre Lasota, "environmental devastation has become a feature of everyday life" for Poles (*The Sciences*, July/Aug. 1987). One quarter of the country's agricultural soil is unfit for food production due to industrial contamination, and only one percent of the water is safe for drinking. Life expectancy for men between the ages of 40 and 60 has fallen

back to the level of 1952. Medical authorities expect 13 million of the 40 million residents to develop "at least one environmentally induced illness—respiratory disease, cancer, skin disease, or afflictions of the central nervous system" (*State of the World*, 1988).

Most cities and villages in Poland have no sewage treatment facilities, and just dump raw sewage into surrounding lakes, rivers and ocean. Ninety percent of the water in lakes and streams is so deficient in dissolved oxygen that no forms of oxygen-breathing life can live in them. Poland holds the world records for acid rain and particulates in the atmosphere; in nearly every major city air pollution is 50 times worse than officially permissible levels. The brown high-sulfur coal used in power plants and industry has damaged over a quarter of the country's forests, extending over and area of 1.25 million acres. The Polish government recently declared Bogomice and four other villages "unfit for human habitation" due to the extremely high levels of heavy metals in the air and soil deposited by emissions from nearby copper-smelting plants.

Poland was heavily bombarded by fallout from the meltdown at Chernobyl. The disaster had a "galvanizing" effect on the people, setting in motion a massive environmental movement. There are now some 2,000 environmental organizations in Poland; one, the *Polski Klub Ekologiczny*, is said to be the largest grassroots ecological group in the (former) Soviet bloc. Despite censorship and heavy repression (which persisted until late 1989) Polish environmental groups have maintained a high level of activity, holding imaginative demonstrations, establishing information centers, and organizing seminars and petition campaigns. The ecological movement has been a major element in the popular upheavals in Poland in recent years. A statement of the major organization Freedom and Peace explicitly links their efforts for social change to environmental damage: "Threatened with the ruin of the biosphere, pollution of air, water and soil, we realize that freedom should also be the possibility to live in non-devastated surroundings."

The Polish government, however, regardless of the skin it wears, continues in its pursuit of profit at the expense of people and the environment. For some time it has been trying to attract Western venture capital to help raise industrial productivity and profitability, and to take advantage of the potential profits to be made from recycling or use of Polish industrial wastes. The current Solidarity-led government has paid lip-service to environmental protection while instituting economic changes which guarantee the opposite: among the first people laid off in the effort to make the Polish economy more competitive have been environmental scientists: "Marek Jakubczyk, a 41-year-old geologist and environmental engineer, is one of the new white-collar unemployed. He formerly advised a mining company in Silesia about how to minimize environmental damage, but was dismissed in a cost-cutting program" (*New York Times*, Jan. 30, 1990).

The environmental crisis in Poland is just a part of a broader area of identical impacts, which includes much of East Germany and Czechoslovakia as well. The region, long known as "the heart of Europe", is now called "the sick heart of Europe" by its inhabitants. The great bulk of Eastern Europe's heavy industries—power plants burning high-sulfur lignite, steel works, and chemical plants—are located in the area which stretches from Leipzig in East Germany to Krakow in Poland and across

northern Czechoslovakia. Czech foresters have dubbed the 350-mile-wide area of forest destruction due to acid rain the "Bermuda Triangle of Pollution." The director of nature conservation in Czechoslovakia's new Ministry of Environment, Frantisek Urban, has called the area an "ecological catastrophe" (*NY Times*, March 19, 1990). In the Erz, Riesen and Tatry mountains, industrial pollution has gone far beyond simple killing of trees by acid rain. Soil acidity is extreme (pH between 3 and 4), allowing aluminum bound in clay particles to be released into groundwater, where it poisons trees and plant roots and drinking supplies. Animal populations have been affected; raptors have died off and rodent populations have skyrocketed. On the barren sites which have replaced the formerly dense forests, winter snow now melts with the first sunshine and runs off the land in a much shorter period of time than before, causing erosion and flooding in spring and water shortages in summer (*NY Times*, March 19, 1990).

The energy source for the industrialization of the region is lignite, extracted from open-pit mines which have obliterated fields, forests and villages. In Czechoslovakia alone, 28 villages were destroyed and 80,000 people evicted from their homes in the last 30 years to make way for open-pit coal mines. "Bulldozers have turned towns,

soil is expected to go on. The rich fields of Bohemia have already yielded 1.5 billion tons of brown coal, and with reserves of a further 5 billion tons, six more villages [have been] slated for destruction. Earlier this year, when President Vaclav Havel visited Most [one of the villages, already partly destroyed] he told the miners that the country would need their coal for many years to come" (*NY Times*, March 1, 1990).

Less information has been available about conditions in Bulgaria and Romania. Heavy metal poisoning from industry has devastated many cities in both countries. "The gradual poisoning of Bulgaria matches the enormous pollution and environmental disaster now being recognized throughout Eastern Europe" (*NY Times*, March 28, 1990). Here's a description of a part of Transylvania in central Romania, from a review of a recent book by Georgina Harding, *In Another Europe: a journey to Romania*:

"The name of the little town of Copsa Mica in southern Transylvania has become synonymous with life under a blanket of industrial filth. There is a blacking factory there whose product is advertised by the dense cloud rising from its chimneys and countless leaking pipes. The local supply of natural gas and other elements is degraded in some unimaginable way to produce carbon black for rubber tyres and ink, but lead and



Collage by Johann Humyn Being (San Francisco, CA).

farms and woodlands into coarse brown deserts and gaping hollows. The smokestacks of the power plants that turn the coal into electricity now mark a skyline thick with soot. On days when the smog is heaviest, the radio warns people to keep their children indoors. The scene is repeated throughout the Central European coal belt....Across this basin, the quest for fuel has razed villages and ravaged the land and is making people nauseated and asthmatic with sulfur-loaded air....East Germany...meets 70 percent of its energy needs with coal, and its open-pit coal mines tear up the equivalent of 8000 football fields worth of land each year" (*NY Times*, March 1, 1990). In Czechoslovakia, "stripping of the

zinc are also refined in the once pretty valley of the Timava. The by-products of non-ferrous metal production contribute to the pall over the valley on the sunniest summer day. There, in the middle of the carpet of black dust, Harding saw 'a flash of yellow. Someone had planted a flowerbed with sunflowers....The owner of the sunflowers explained that 'I spray them with water or they would not be yellow for long.' Her vegetable patch was as black as the crops in the fields around. A couple of hours in Copsa Mica leave a film of grime on the exposed flesh of visitors or worming its way into the fabrics of their clothes. Doctors in the city of Sibiu, not far to the south, estimate that more than 60 percent of the people in the Timava Mare

Anarchy in Eastern Europe!

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establish networks, it is also true for western anarchists involved with solidarity with the East. Perhaps this can be one of the outcomes of the Trieste meeting.

Another possibility is to help establish cooperative, self-managed business ventures by providing seed money, advice and technical knowledge. And finally, sometime in the future we may find ourselves organizing joint East-West demonstrations or direct actions, for example, against one of the many multinationals that will soon be in every country.

Neither East Nor West

Potential for a new internationalism

The fall of Communist rule, the opening up of society, and the consequent emergence of new and diverse anarchist groups in Eastern Europe brings with it possibilities for the anarchist movement on an international and intercontinental or global level.

The crisis of eastern Communism may very well become a crisis for western Marxism, further weakening its position and helping to draw more people in the West towards libertarian ideas and actions. As well, there exists the potential for the new forms of anarchism which emerge in the East to have an influence on the rest of the anarchist community, a possibility for a synthesis of post-Communist anarchism and western post-industrial anarchism, although this could be many years ahead. The disintegration of the "Iron Curtain," the removal of the Communist threat, will undoubtedly make more people question the need for such a large military budget and may be a boost to antimilitarism and disarmament movements. There are numerous outcomes which are impossible to predict or imagine, considering how quickly these changes in the East are taking place.

At the same time that Eastern Europe's transformation is a beacon of hope for anarchists and others, it is important to remember that the power of the state in much of the world is not receding, but continuing to grow. This is definitely true in Western Europe, where steps are being taken towards the formation of a multinational state. A greater economic unification and normalization of certain laws in 1992 is the first stage. Anarchists are becoming more concerned about the issue of "92" and while it can not be said that there is an anti-'92 movement with force, some see the potential that organizing around this point can lead to the development of a continental perspective and movement. In this regard, Spanish anarchists have been particularly active, especially since the '92 Olympics are scheduled for Barcelona and will be used as a platform to expound on the virtues of a united Europe.

The fall of the Communist state in the East and the rise of the multinational state in the West provide anarchists in all of Europe with a reason and an opportunity to work together on a continental basis. As has been happening in North America since 1986, there have not been similar continental gatherings and networks in Europe. There is the International Federation of Anarchists which meets every four years and will in fact meet again this fall in Valencia, Spain. They are essentially a South European confederation of Spanish, French, and Italian federations and some say they are a bit traditional and bureaucratic. There are sometimes regional gatherings. Recently Dutch, French, German and Belgian anarchists met for a weekend in Holland. In Germany there is an initiative to create a German Anarchist Federation, which I believe (since unification seems imminent)

will include East Germany. And of course there is the upcoming meeting in Trieste of East Europeans followed shortly by the Soviet Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation Congress on May 1 and 2.

Definitely regional gatherings take place and there are connections between anarchists in many different countries and infor-

unusually warm winter in a row. The global ecological crisis is just that—global. It knows no boundaries of states, nor feels any separation of continents. It is just as warm here in the "free" world as it is a few miles away in Yugoslavia. Acid rain falls and destroys "capitalist" and "communist" forests. Everyone is concerned about the environment.

Murray Bookchin who was recently on a speaking tour in Italy and who I heard in Milano and Pisa said the following, "We must always present the message that this ecological crisis is a social crisis and involves changes in society of a fundamental nature. The idea of the domination of nature stems from the idea of domination of man over

a regional and continental basis, but also there is good reason for this kind of cooperation on an intercontinental or global level. The ecological crisis is just one basis for such global networking. There is also the problem of multinational corporations and their multinational homogeneous "culture," the problem of North-South division in the world, and many other problems which transcend those of individual nation states.

The governments, the leaders, the corporations, have well established structures for global communication. There are constant meetings, conferences, congresses, and coordination of activities. I just read in the newspaper, for example, that the Group of 7 leading industrial "democracies"—USA, Japan, W. Germany, France, Britain, Italy and Canada—will meet in Houston, Texas on July 9, 10, and 11. Of course, we don't have the resources that they do. And I am not suggesting that we create some sort of International Anarchist Organization like the UN. Nor do I think it is feasible to initially have an intercontinental anarchist gathering of North American, South American, European, Asian, African, and Australian anarchists.

However, developing further links, contacts, and communication between Europe and North America is definitely manageable and the prospect of organizing some sort of joint intercontinental gathering between the two within the next several years is quite realizable. Since I am a North American who has been in Europe for more than one year and have met anarchists from many European countries, it is evident why I have this idea. A number of people who I have spoken to here have expressed their disappointment about the lack of good communication with and knowledge of anarchist movements on the other side of the ocean. And conversely, I know from personal experience that most North Americans don't know very much about anarchism in Europe. It is conceivable that a renewed interest amongst the North American anarchist community in the recent changes in Eastern Europe could evolve into an interest in the anarchist community of Europe as a whole, especially concerning issues which transcend particular nation states like Europe 92 and the unification of Germany.

Conclusion

I know that it is a big jump to go from describing the new anarchist groups in Eastern Europe to envisioning global libertarian networks and intercontinental European-North American anarchist gatherings. It may be premature to consider these potentials and the anarchist community may not be ready for such an undertaking. But it just may be that such a quantum leap is not only useful but necessary. The problems in the world are of such dimension today that while the overused phrase "Think Globally, Act Locally" is still relevant, of equal relevance may be the idea: Think Globally, Act Globally.

One final point, in thinking about anarchist organizing on such a scale, it is easy to lose sight of the individual. An anarchist organization, for it to be truly libertarian, must be firmly rooted in the individual and libertarian relationships amongst people and a libertarian culture. John Clark, who wrote the book, *The Anarchist Moment: Reflections on Culture, Nature, and Power*, says it much better than I can. His ideas, of which the following is a synopsis, present a challenge to the anarchist community in both the East and in the West.

"In the context of this decay of traditional ideologies, both of the right and of the left, the task of formulating the libertarian problematics takes on increasing urgency. The question is whether the libertarian movement will shake off its own attachment to the remnants of these moribund ideologies, and give some sort of conscious direction to the construction of a new social reality, or whether it will pass up this opportunity for making its contribution to the break with past forms of domination...

What then is the libertarian response to this



Polish cops attack a demonstration.

mal networks. However, as has been voiced by people I've met from many countries, anarchists in Europe feel disconnected from or know little about what is happening in other countries. This is due to a variety of reasons, but perhaps the principle one is the problem of communication. Unlike North America, where there are two predominant languages and one minor one—English, Spanish and French—Europe has a multitude of languages of which not one is understood and spoken by all. Few Italian anarchists, for example, can read German and know the thoughts and activities of West German anarchists who are just a few hundred miles away. So, for the moment, there is not a sense of a continental anarchist movement. But now, more than before, exists the possibility for creating one.

As I sit outside in Trieste and write in the warmth of the sun (and get sun cancer), I remember that it was reported a few days ago that temperatures haven't been this high since 1923, and this is Europe's second

man, man over woman, in short, hierarchies. We must abolish hierarchies and domination and develop a cooperative society based on sharing and the common interests of humanity, develop new communities, and a radically new kind of politics. Decentralization into communities that are carefully shaped to fit into a confederation of communities which grows parallel to the State." The global ecological crisis requires global social and political transformation. It may be an impossible dream and it could be too late to avoid the earth becoming a giant oven. Also, the necessary global social transformation will not inevitably be a libertarian one based on anarchist principles. It is possible that some sort of eco-fascism is on the horizon.

The purpose of this digression is to illuminate the idea that not only is there good reason for anarchists from different countries to initiate an exchange of information and ideas, host meetings and gatherings and create ongoing communication networks on



Polish cops cower under a shower of rocks.

historical predicament? It seems that there are two lines of development within the libertarian left, or the social anarchist movement, which have deep historical roots, and which are presently re-emerging as distinct currents. On the one hand, there are those who continue to conceive of the project of social emancipation primarily in terms of the mode of production, economic class analysis and class struggle. On the other, there are those whose approach is more multi-dimensional, and might be described as a cultural orientation...

"What is the libertarian response to this dilemma? Is it a revival of class politics, a new attempt at a cultural transformation, or some synthesis of the two?..."

"The libertarian problematic today is, of course, to develop a coherent, systematic and thoroughly critical view of reality, and a practice adequate to transform reality in accord with this vision. If we are successfully to challenge the system of domination, we must achieve an understanding of reality as a whole, including the total symbolic universe by which we interpret and indeed construct reality. Consequently, we must confront a multitude of questions of ontology, of social and cultural theory, and of psychology. Fortunately, libertarian thought has been moving slowly but consistently in the direction of such an all-embracing vision in recent years, especially as it has come to see the ecological perspective as the macrocosmic correlate of the libertarian conception of a cooperative, voluntarily organized society. It has been moving towards a fully developed, organic theory of reality, a theory which proposes a distinct view of nature, of human society, of the group, and of the self or person.

"What does this imply on the level of concrete practice? It means that the libertarian problematic in the field of action and organization is above all a problematic of social regeneration. Confronted with the final truths of western civilization—disintegration, atomization, egoism, and domination—the libertarian movement must place the highest priority on creating libertarian patterns of interaction at the most basic level, the affinity group. This means that organizations like anarcho-syndicalists unions and anarchist federations will, at best, remain incapable of social transformation and, at worst, become frameworks for reproducing the system of domination, unless they are rooted in a firmly established libertarian culture, in libertarian human relationships, and in a libertarian perception of reality. The movement must not only be firmly rooted in the affinity group, and concern itself with the development of libertarian primary relationships, but it must also strive toward building a larger cultural and organizational structure. While discarding the fatal illusion that any mere organizational form can lead to liberatory social transformation, it must regenerate the impulse toward the establishment of cooperatives, collectives, and communes as necessary elements in the evolution of a libertarian culture. It will continue the development and application of decentralist, liberatory technology. It will once more grasp the centrality of libertarian education. And it will never forget the importance of the aesthetic dimension, continuing the rich tradition of libertarian self-expression, for anarchism is as much as anything the synthesis of art and life, the conception of the community as a work of art."



A Polish cop takes one on the head.

EAST

—Czechoslovakia—

C.A.S.
P. Box 223
Praha 1
11121

—Hungary—

Autonómia
c/o Eotvos Club
Károlyi M. Ut 9
1053 Budapest

—Poland—

Marcin Rey c/o Christian Veron
6 Rue Des Hauts Pavés
44000 Nantes, France
Tel: 40 08 24 93
[Marcin represents the Polish anarchist federation in the West. Good English. He also knows the situation in Czechoslovakia and E. Germany very well.]

Krzysztof Galinski
NA Zboczu 87
Gdansk

Marek Kurzyniec
Ul Smolensk 16/8
31112 Krakow
Tel: 0048
2/225061
[Both Krzysztof & Marek are part of the Polish federation and work together on an "internal bulletin," so are good connection points with the rest.]

Klaudiusz Wesotek
Ulica Slupska 32/2
800-392 Gdansk
[Connection for Wolnosc i Pokoj (WIP) and puts out the magazine A Capella]

Januse Waluszko
RSA
Ul. Starejdomk, 6/9
80-857 Gdansk
[RSA = "Movement for an Alternative Society"]

Jola Plakwicz Gorska 7/53
00-740 Warsaw
Tel: 022-400819
[Polish Feminist Association]

Ryszard K
Skrytka Polzowa 577
80-958 Gdansk
[Gdansk gay group]

East European Contact Addresses

—Soviet Union—

113208 Moskva
Ul. Bolotnikovskaya Dom 38, Korp 6, k.v. 47
A.V. Shershukov
Tel: 121-70-01

117279 Moskva
Ul. Miklukho Maklaya Dom 38, k.v. 136
V. Gubarev
Tel: 420-37-70
[Both are contacts for Moscow KAS and Obshchina]

—Yugoslavia—

Mira Oklodzija
Maksimirska 76
41000 Zagreb
Tel: 041.223009

Inoc Trivo
Marsala Birjuzovas 19/IV
11000 Beograd
Tel: 011/187-869
[Two anarchists in Yugoslavia, part of an informal network]

WEST

—France—

Iztok
BP 70
75563 Paris Cedex 12
[Journal about libertarian movements in East Europe. (Helping with Trieste meeting).]

Federation Anarchiste
145 Rue Amelot
75011 Paris France
[Also address for I.F.A. contacts with Bulgarian Anarchists Federation in Paris. And for the I.F.A. meeting in Valencia, Spain in the fall.]

—Great Britain—

Black Flag
BM Hurricane
London WC1N3XX

Freedom
84b Whitechapel High St.
London E17QX
[Both have articles in English about East Europe]

London Greenpeace
5 Caledonian Road
London N1

[Different than Greenpeace. Anarchist connections with Poland]

—Italy—

Germinal
Via Massini 11
34121 Trieste
[Organizing meeting in April]

Umanita Nova
Via Ernesto Rossi 80
57100 Livorno
[Weekly anarchist paper now with much coverage of anarchist movements in East Europe.]

FAI
Viale Monza 255
20126 Milan
Tel: 02 255 19 94 (Monday and Thursday 8-8)
[Italian Anarchist Federation. Also helping with Trieste meeting in April. May be most progressive and open federation in I.F.A.]

Robertino Barbieri
V. Calcesana 108
58010 Ghezzano (PI)
Tel: (050) 879202
[Translates often English to Italian for Umanita Nova. Very interested in developing better communication and mutual understanding between European and North American anarchists. Appreciates visitors from the States!]

—Netherlands—

Karl Krueger
PB 61523
2506 AM Den Haag
[Well connected with anarchist community in Europe (East and West). Contact person for the recent regional gathering of German, Dutch, French and Belgian anarchists.]

Europe Against the Current
Joden Breestraat 24
1011 NK Amsterdam
Tel: (020) 258979 or 272643
[Not anarchist. But they are collecting addresses for "alternative, independent and radical" groups in all of Europe (East and West). They now have more than 5,000 addresses which also include a lot of anarchist ones (on a database). They have modem and can download the database to other computers. Bas Moreel—who can be reached through this address—is well connected with anarchists in Europe and especially interested in East Europe.]

—Spain—

Ateneu Llibertari Del Poble Sec
c/ Elcano 48
08004 Barcelona
Tel: 329 36 61
[Independent, unaffiliated with federations, open point of view, many young people, especially concerned with '92 and Olympics in Barcelona. Definitely interested in developing continental networks of anarchists.]

—Sweden—

SAC
Svavagen 98
11350 Stockholm
Contact: Annica Hjelm
Tel: (8) 343559
[Swedish anarcho-syndicalists. They have best connections with Soviet anarchists and KAS. They travel frequently to Soviet Union.]

Agora
PO Box 8190
10420 Stockholm
Contact: Ana Valdes
[Ana Valdes is interested in developing the European anarchist movement on a continental level. She is of South American origin and speaks Spanish]

—West Germany—

Schwarzer Faden
Postfach 1159
0-7043 Grafenau 1
Tel: 07033/44273
[Contact for East German anarchists]

Freie Arbeiter Union (FAU)
Kirch Str. 1
430 Gransee
[Contact for East German anarchists]

IAFD
PLK 010856
D 4150 Krefeld
[Contact for East German anarchists. "Initiative for an anarchist federation in Deutschland."]

The Intifada

Continued from page 4

ished from the town.

The masked youths, however, do not always heed these limitations. In the much-publicized case of Nablus, two groups of Palestinian youths, known respectively as "The Red Eagles" and "The Black Panthers," ignored even the personal appeals of PLO leader Yassar Arafat, transmitted on PLO radio, to restrict their killings of suspected collaborators. A captured Red Eagle told Israeli television: "With all respect to Abu-Amar (Arafat), he lives abroad and does not know our local situation. Whenever we find a collaborator we deal with him, with no regrets."

A parade, organized by the Black Panthers in the Nablus Casba, was shown by foreign television networks, with the comment, "it seems the Israeli army is losing control." The army command was put under strong pressure to "put an end to the embarrassment." Soldiers (disguised, according to the Israeli press, as Arab women) surprised the Black Panthers at their rendezvous, shot down four of them and captured the rest. The whole of Nablus was placed under curfew, and soldiers distributed at the houses leaflets reading: "Inhabitants of Nablus! The forces of Law and Order have liberated you from the Black Panther Gang. At your service, the Israeli Defence Forces." Shortly after the curfew was lifted, hundreds of youths poured into the streets, chanting "We are all Black Panthers!" Throughout the Occupied Territories, three days of mourning were observed for the dead Panthers, now universally recognized as martyrs for the Palestinian cause.

-Adam Keller

Reprinted from *The Other Israel* #36/Nov.-Dec. '89 (POB 956, Tel-Aviv 61008, Israel).

Without Borders follow-up

A letter from the Without Borders group

Greetings,

Last July, the Without Borders Anarchist Conference was held in San Francisco, CA. It was a celebration of anarchist culture, literature, history and (anti) politics. Several thousand participants attended the six day event.

After expenses, we are very lucky to have surplus money. In the spirit of mutual aid and a world without borders we are dividing the money among a number of groups:

Eastern Europe conference	\$300.00	Muntania [Argentina]	50.00
[Trieste, Italy]		Comunidad [Sweden/Uruguay]	50.00
Anarchist Hotline	300.00	PANAL	50.00
Sabotage Bookstore [New York]	200.00	Black Cross [England]	50.00
Democracy Wall [Hong Kong]	100.00	Kick It Over [Canada]	50.00
Wooden Shoe Bookstore [Philadelphia]	100.00	Schwartz Roter [Germany]	50.00
AK Distribution [Scotland]	75.00	Androzine [France]	50.00
Alternative Gallery [Greece]	75.00	Guangara Libertaria [U.S.A./Cuba]	50.00
121 Books [England]	75.00	La Lletra A [Spain]	50.00
Love & Rage	50.00	Anti-Censorship in South Africa	50.00
Ecomedia Toronto	50.00	Left Bank Prisoners Project	25.00
The Match!	50.00	Bound Together Prisoners Project	25.00
Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed	50.00	Korean Anarchist Federation	25.00
RFD	50.00	Already sent/spent:	
Anarchist Labor Bulletin	50.00	Northwest Anarchist Gathering	200.00
The Other Israel [Israel]	50.00	Seeds for Peace	500.00
Testimonias [Mexico]	50.00	1991 Americas Anarchist Conference	1500.00
Manushi [India]	50.00	[Mexico]	
Fifth Estate	50.00	Emergency Fund	350.00
Freedom [England]	50.00		

We hope this money helps these groups in some way. Please stay in touch with us.

Sin Fronteras,
WOB Finishing Group
1369 Haight Street
San Francisco, CA. 94117

Columns

The Iconoclast's Hammer by Feral Faun

Social transformation— or the abolition of society

"Society...1. a group of persons who have the same customs, beliefs, etc. or live under a common government and who are thought of as forming a single community...3. all people, when thought of as forming a community in which each person is partly dependent on all the rest" Webster's New World Dictionary

Nothing we "know" can be assumed to be true—none of our conceptions of the world are sacred and we would do well to question them all. Many anarchists talk about creating a "new" or "free" society. But few question the idea of society itself. The conception of society is amorphous—and so more difficult to deal with than particular aspects of it like government, religion, capitalism or technology. It is so ingrained in us that questioning it feels like questioning our very nature—which makes it all the more necessary to question it. Freeing ourselves from the character armor that represses our desires and passions may very well demand, not merely the transformation of society, but its abolition.

The dictionary definitions above show society to be a single entity made up of individuals who are in a condition of (at least potential) dependency upon each other—which is to say, who are not complete in themselves. I see society as a system of relationships between beings who are acting (or being treated) as social roles in order to reproduce the system and themselves as social individuals.

The dependency of social individuals is not the same as the biological dependency of infants. Biological dependency ends once the child achieves adequate mobility and hand-and-eye coordination (in about five years). But in those five years, the social relationships of the family repress children's desires, instill fear of the world into them and so submerge the potential for full, free, creative individuality beneath the layers of armoring which are the social individual, beneath the psychic dependency which makes us cling desperately to each other while we despise each other. All social relationships have their basis in the incompleteness produced by the repression of our passions and desires. Their basis is our need for each other, not our desire for each other. We are using each other. So every social relationship is an employer/employee relationship, which is why they seem always, to one extent or another, to become adversarial—whether through joking put-downs, bickering or full-fledged fighting. How can we help but despise those we use and hate those who use us?

Society cannot exist apart from social roles—this is why the family and education in some form are essential parts of society. The social individual doesn't play only one social role—but melds together many roles which create the character armor which is mistaken for "individuality."

Social roles are ways in which individuals are defined by the whole system of relationships that is society in order to reproduce society. They make individuals useful to society by making them predictable, by defining their activities in terms of the needs of society. Social roles are work—in the broad sense of activity that reproduces the production/consumption cycle. Society is thus the domestication of human beings—the transformation of potentially creative, playful, wild beings who can relate freely in terms of their desires into deformed beings using each other to try to meet desperate needs, but succeeding only at reproducing the need and the system of relationships based on it.

"A pox on all captivity, even should it be in the interest of the universal good, even in Montezuma's

garden of precious stones." Andre Breton

Free-spirited individuals have no interest in seriously relating as social roles. Predictable, predetermined relationships bore us and we have no desire to continue to reproduce them. It is true that they offer some security, stability and (luke-)warmth...but at such expense! Rather, we want freedom to relate in terms of our unrepressed desires, the opening of all possibilities, the raging fire of our passions unbound. And such a life lies outside any system of predictable, predetermined relationships.

Society offers safety, but it does so by eradicating the risk that is essential to free play and adventure. It offers us survival—in exchange for our lives. For the survival it offers us is survival as social individuals—as beings who are composites of social roles, alienated from their passions and desires—involved in social relationships to which we are addicted, but which never satisfy.

A world of free relating among unrepressed individuals would be a world free of society. All interactions would be determined immediately. All by the individuals involved, in terms of their desires—not by the necessities of a social system. We would tend to amaze, delight, enrage each other, to evoke real passion rather than mere boredom, complacency, disgust, or security. Every encounter would have a potential for marvelous adventure which cannot fully exist where most relating is in the form of social relationships. So rather than remain captive in this "garden of precious stones" called society, I choose to struggle to abolish society—and that has several implications as to how I understand "revolution" (for want of a better term).

The struggle to transform society is always a struggle for power, because its goal is to gain control over the system of relationships that is society (a goal which I see as unrealistic since this system is now mostly beyond anyone's control). As such, it cannot be an individual struggle. It requires mass or class activity. Individuals have to define themselves as social beings in this struggle, suppressing any individual desires which do not fit in to the "greater" goal of social transformation.

Notes toward a statement of principles by boog

The two big lies of capitalist economics

A social system cannot be enforced by police. It must be built on the acceptance of its basic assumptions by most of its members. If tomorrow we all decided to run naked in the streets they couldn't stop us—there aren't enough police. Laws can only be enforced when we police ourselves, when we have cops in our heads.

Alexander Berkman said it like this:

"Our social institutions are founded on certain ideas; so long as the latter are generally believed, the institutions built on them are safe...the weakening of the ideas which support the evil and oppressive conditions means the ultimate breakdown of government and capitalism."

Gustav Landauer said it like this:

"The state is not something that can be destroyed by a revolution, but is a condition, a certain relationship between human beings, a mode of human behavior; we destroy it by contracting other relationships, by behaving differently."

Capitalism works because most of us have swallowed these two big lies:

- 1) Society is best organized when people look after their own self-interest at the expense of everyone else's. In fact, this is human nature.
- 2) A healthy economy can only be based on ever-

The struggle to abolish society is a struggle to abolish power. It is essentially the struggle of individuals to live free of social roles and rules, to live out their desires passionately, to live out all the most marvelous things they can imagine. Group projects and struggles are part of this, but they grow from the ways in which the desires of the individuals can enhance each other, and will dissolve when they begin to stifle the individuals. The path of this struggle cannot be mapped out because its basis is the confrontation between the desires of the free-spirited individual and the demands of society. But analyses of the ways in which society molds us and of the failures and successes of past rebellions are possible.

The tactics used against society are as many as the individuals involved, but all share the aim of undermining social control and conditioning, and freeing the individual's desires and passions. The unpredictability of humor and playfulness are essential, evoking a Dionysian chaos. Playing with social roles in ways that undermine their usefulness to society, that turn them on their head, making toys of them is a worthy practice. But most importantly, let us confront society with ourselves, with our unique desires and passions, with the attitude that we are not going to give in to it, or center our activities around it, but are going to live on our own terms.

Society is not a neutral force. Social relationships only exist by the suppression of the real desires and passions of individuals, by the repression of all that makes free relating possible. Society is domestication, the transformation of individuals into use value and of free play into work. Free relating among individuals who refuse and resist their domestication undermines all society, and opens all possibilities. And to those who feel that they can achieve freedom through a merely social revolution, I end with these words of Renzo Navatore:

"You are waiting for the revolution? Let it be! My own began a long time ago! When you will be ready...I won't mind going along with you for a while. But when you'll stop, I shall continue on my insane and triumphant way toward the great and sublime conquest of the nothing!"

expanding consumption and production. This can go on forever. Science will overcome all obstacles to the continuation of this process.

Fortunately for those of us who are working on changing this society (but unfortunately for those of us who have to live in it), these are some of the nuttiest ideas imaginable.

Big lie #1

"Society is best organized when people look after their own self interest at the expense of everyone else's. In fact this is human nature."

This idea arose with the breakdown of feudalism in Europe and the rise of the modern Western state. Thomas Hobbes was one of its earliest proponents in his *Leviathan*, where he argued for the necessity of a strong central state in order to prevent (or at least to referee) the "war of all against all." Since the publication of Charles Darwin's *The Origin of the Species* the idea of "the survival of the fittest" has become a sort of secular religion.

Adam Smith spoke of human beings' natural "propensity to truck and barter." Modern day beneficiaries of (so-called) free market capitalism have expanded on this notion and now ask us to believe that it is human nature for people to make themselves miserable in the process of piling up huge piles of cash, that those who do this best do so because they are superior people, and that furthermore it is perfectly OK for them to not be concerned about the other people they run over in the process.

The folks who ask us to believe all this fail to point out that this state of economic civil war is historically a very new thing. Far from being human nature, it is something completely outside the experience of most of the people who have ever lived. Society functions today not because of unrestricted economic competition between individuals, but because of what remains of mutual aid and human solidarity. This can be

Columns



Untitled (Financial District, San Francisco, July 1989) Scott Yoos, Olympia, WA.

seen in the rising rates of suicide, mental illness, and other signs of alienation and social disintegration that are always associated with capitalist "progress."

Peter Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid* gives the anarchist's answer to Darwin's dot-eat-dog view of the natural world. Kropotkin argues that cooperation plays at least as great a role in the natural world as does competition. He illustrates his point with many examples of individual members of animal species acting together to further their own and their species' survival. Kropotkin also demonstrates the principle of mutual aid at work in a wide range of primitive societies.

Perhaps the fundamental absurdity of this idea of harmony-through-conflict can best be demonstrated with an example.

Imagine putting a bunch of people together in a room and giving them baseball bats and telling them that the way they will be best off is if they hit everybody else harder than they get hit in return. It won't take most people long to figure out that they will all be better off if nobody hits anybody over the head with a baseball bat. And even if a few big people decide that they can get what they want by ganging up on the little folks, they will soon figure out that they will be better off by sticking together than by continuing to hit each other (however, in real life, this often takes a long time to put into practice—see *The Wretched of the Earth* by Franz Fanon for a good discussion of why oppressed people so often spend so much of their energy fighting among themselves rather than joining together to fight their common oppressor).

If we could take all the human energy and ability that we now waste fighting each other and trying to steal money from each other we could make this Earth into a paradise faster than you can say "anarcho-syndicalism."

Big lie #2

"A healthy economy can only be based on ever expanding production and consumption. This can go on forever. Science will overcome all obstacles to the continuation of this process."

This idea involves a denial of the basic laws of physical reality.

We live on a finite planet. It is physically impossible for the production of goods to keep expanding forever. We are finite creatures and can thus only consume a finite amount of goods and services.

A capitalist economy is by its very nature unsustainable. A capitalist economy operating in a "healthy" condition will eventually create the conditions that will lead to a crisis in its operation. Overproduction

leads to recurrent recessions and depressions in the economy, and has been the driving force behind the incredible proliferation of weapons we have seen in this century. Industrial production has already reached a level that threatens global environmental collapse.

The capitalist economy is a giant pyramid scheme, borrowing from tomorrow to pay for today. Pyramid schemes are frowned upon (and are illegal in most places) because when they collapse the people on the bottom get burned. In the case of the pyramid scheme of capitalist economics the people who lose are our children, who don't have an inhabitable planet left to live on any more. The Lakota Sioux ensured the sustainability of their "primitive" society by always considering the consequences that their actions would have on the next seven generations. In contrast, calculations by modern capitalist economists discount values proportionately to their distance in the future—getting \$1 now is more desirable than getting \$20 in twenty years (or \$10 or \$50, the number will vary from economist to economist; the important point is that values very far in the future quickly become irrelevant in their calculations). Long term sustainability is sacrificed for short term gain. Free market economists have not grasped the crucial insight of the ecology movement that we do not inherit the Earth from our parents—we borrow it from our children.

Capitalist economics rests on the assumption that people's well being increases proportionately as their consumption of goods and services increases. This is obviously not true. More Americans today suffer from disease caused by affluence than caused by poverty. Most Americans would be healthier if they had less—if they walked and rode bicycles instead of driving everywhere, if they ate grains & vegetables instead of HoHos & TV dinners, if they played football rather than watching it on TV. And since they'd need less they could work less and slow down and avoid ulcers and other stress-related sickness. But there are no profits to be made unless an exchange takes place—if you grow your own vegetables instead of buying them at the store (and going to work making things for someone else so you can get the money to buy them at the store, etc.) then nobody else gets to make any money off of you. And the Gross National Product goes up when you start buying your carrots at the store (even though they don't taste as good as the ones from your garden), and this the capitalist economists hail as progress.

What can I do?

Obviously the first step each one of us can take toward changing this system is to refuse to be bam-

boozled by it any longer.

The second step is to encourage others to do so. One big advantage we have is that the assumptions that the capitalist system is built on cannot stand up to rational examination. The most revolutionary thing we can do at this point is to encourage people to think for themselves.

A's for Attitude

The role of the parent

I never could figure out why I should like my parents more than anyone else or even like them for that matter. I found that it would be most useful for me to understand them and to deal with them, or to disassociate myself with them completely, whichever was more feasible. Walking away was always the most feasible, but eventually I began to feel that the problem itself was unresolved. So I went back, and learned a few things when I got there.

My parents were always doing stupid things as far as I was concerned. So were the relatives and certain friends of mine. What I failed to ask in all cases is "why?" I just took it that they were acting like assholes and fuck 'em all. I lacked the passion to discover the roots of the problem; I just wanted to change my situation, then and there. But I kept running into the same problems and attitudes with others; they didn't go away. I had to find a rational way to deal with the people around me.

I won't forgive the parents or the relatives for the way they related to me. I understand they did what they believed they should, but they tried to exercise authority and control over me. As Proudhon said, "Whoever puts his hand on me to govern me is an usurper and a tyrant; I declare him my enemy." On the other hand, as an anarchist you hope to change what you can. If it can be done at all, it can be done. And I'm not an individualist; I don't want to hang by myself. And I believe that we can change ourselves and help others find the inspiration to do the same. So I did what I could: refused to obey, and did what I felt was right, then tried to make it understood why.

The role of the parent is more than a role of supervision. They are allowed the authority to impose rule at their whim. They are the dictators of the home. And while some only want their children to be happy, others want to live their lives vicariously through those of their children. The children are trapped in a situation that they didn't choose, an indication of more to come. Obedience is obligatory; a parent might do anything to perpetuate his or her authority. This behavior is then mimicked in adulthood, or in other aspects of life. The boss and the politician exercise the same control, except they have more to steal than control of one's life. This authority must not only be questioned but also challenged to put us on the road to its destruction.

Just like everyone else, children have been robbed of the opportunity to develop their skills as responsible people capable of functioning without authority. People always tell me that you can't give children total liberty. That concept in itself is flawed because if you have to give liberty, it's not liberty to begin with.

Arguments for exercising authority abound; after all, you wouldn't let a kid walk into the middle of the street would you? That's not a good argument for authority; that's a good argument against letting people walk into the middle of the street.

Children don't know everything and often are unaware that certain things are dangerous. But the same goes for adults. If a car were coming, I wouldn't let an adult walk in front of it either. That's not restricting a person's free will. When a person doesn't understand that something is dangerous, you communicate that to them. With an adult you may tell them; with a child you may have to communicate that by

Continued on page 18

Letters



We would like to encourage readers to write us in order to continue this dialogue both with those who are sympathetic and those who are critical of anarchist theories and practices. All letters to *Anarchy* will be printed with the author's initials only, unless it is specifically stated that her/his full name may be used, or that s/he wishes to remain anonymous, or the name already appears in the paper—as in the case of an author of an article printed in *Anarchy*.

We will edit letters that are redundant, overly long, unreadable or excessively boring. Please limit length to four double-spaced, typewritten pages. Address your letters to *Anarchy*, c/o C.A.L., POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446. We look forward to hearing from you all!

Sabotage in New York

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am the editor of *The Shadow*, an underground anarchist newsletter based on the lower east side in New York City. We are more concerned with action, strategy & information than with ideology or theory. To us, anarchy in motion/action speaks louder than anarchy in words or print.

To that end, we are plugged into individual groups that take over abandoned city-owned buildings ("squatters"), that feed homeless people in the neighborhood ("Food Not Bombs"), and more. We have also opened what is the only anarchist bookstore in New York City ("Sabotage"—96 St. Marx Place, New York, NY. 10009). This will include a people's switchboard for information dissemination, and we will raise funds to keep other projects going.

We would like to hear from and hook up with anyone who would like info on what's really happening in N.Y.C. and who has info & publications to share or get distributed from our store.

There is a very real and functional anarchist community here, and everyday we grow a little more!!

Peace on Earth,
Chris Flash,
Shadow Press,
POB 20298,
New York, NY. 10009

Finding the truth!

[Dear Lev,]

Thanks for the kind reply to my letter of which is not for publication, fragmented, shades of quadrophenia? and bad thinking is all thinking to respond the letter by K/OZ-1 what a idiot but the problem is: ignorance → fear → morality → government → and ultimately escape from responsibility and freedom, all of which has been noted before, incidentally I am writing this after inadvertently stayed up all night planning a trip to somewhere to enjoy life while I may and help with the acid rain, having quit my lucrative job and abandoned a promising career for the purpose of finding the truth! and honing up my righting skills. So I am sending no money this time. Also am moving effective end of the calendar year and no forwarding address so send the remainder of my subscription to some other deserving prisoner if you want, to end this sentence. Finally, there is no end in sight. I can see for miles and miles, 2. But if everything I say is a lie, which is true, no news is old news, nanoo nanoo. But I digress. (#22). I like the letters best of all to read. One practical thing is to find a place to

live like a farm with others who want to live a more holistic or ambiguous lifestyle using their intelligence to SURVIVE the insanity of a society composed of people too ignorant to understand that none of us knows what we're doing. Seek and ye shall find: "no quotes." Maybe more specific details later as I am able but really you're on your own. Trust yourself, but not too much. In passing, I derived the ultimate occult secret of the universe and feel disposed to share it with—the Principle of Conservation of Confusion:

Confusion is neither created nor destroyed,
but momely rathered outgrabe.
It has something to do with deja vu or jamais vu or both or neither or something else. I was sorry for the apology but now I'm not.

In sanity,
Name Less
Here and There
Ps. Please retain Capitalization of the "eyes". Farewell. Buy now!

Repudiate the vanguardists

Dear Anarchy,

I found your coverage of Anar-Con '89 somewhat wide of the mark. Although the organization was reasonably good, many workshops were quite effectively disrupted by the Marxists and other non-anarchists who literally flooded the Conference site. Few participants had any sense whatsoever of what basic anarchist principles might mean (as both Chernyi and Dog report), or any discernable interest in learning about them. The two articles which dominate your coverage celebrate the gatherings worst failures. "Rose May Dants" celebrates the spiritualist/confusionist presence which dominated so much of the Gathering, and which so urgently needs to be confronted if anarchists are to reestablish a presence in what passes for the anarchist movement.

But I was appalled by M's report of the Berkeley "action." M. somehow concludes that the mindless rioting of the DOAers was "barely effective, but it was effective." He complains that militancy was excluded (this from an "action" that trashed a soup kitchen and battled homeless people in the streets), that youth were effectively excluded from workshops (at least two-thirds of participants were under age 21 from the looks of things; surely with such numbers they could have dominated discussion in any workshop they chose to attend—and besides I'm somewhat tired of being dismissed as an old fogey at age 29), and other such nonsense. M's article makes it quite clear that he has no interest whatsoever in discussing anarchist

principles, in building a free society or organizing an anarchist movement—indeed, no interest in anything at all beyond the death-wish demos he has been associated with at the last 3 Gatherings, as well as in his hometown. (It is not at all difficult to penetrate beyond the pseudonym to the "anarchist" functionary of so many names who shares with the Trots responsibility for launching the new "anarchist" paper.) His calls for para-military organization and streetfighting have nothing whatsoever to do with the task of building an anarchist movement, or building self-organization in our communities and workplaces (precondition for a free society). It is to the credit of the AnarCon attendees that they stayed away from this mini-riot in droves.

It's time for the Anarchist movement to repudiate these vanguardists—to let them know in no uncertain terms that they will no longer be permitted to attend our meetings, disrupt our demonstrations, publish in our journals, or discredit our movement. Anarchists are not thugs, and there is no reason that we should allow these thugs to continue infiltrating and disrupting our movement.

For Freedom,
J.B., Champaign, IL.

As We See It! criticisms

Some critical points about/relating to *As We See It!* (C.A.L.).
1. Anarchy vs. Anarchism/Beyond Ideology: pts. 9,6,7,8,10.

Components of ideological, alienated existence seem to be primal myth and symbolizing (which allows subjects to become objects—or at least treatable as such) which in advanced or completed form become character, spectacle and ideology. Is there a "more inclusive and integral conception of reason" (7), or a "more dialectical and pragmatic attitude"? a post-ideological, or post-paradigmatic, post-mythological existence? How/can we say it (or see it)—a non-symbolic, non-objectified world of subjects (sounds eastern or like an anthropomorphic universe)? Is there a non-ideological logic or language or reason (why)? How is no god different than god? or anarchy it?

Is this simply a greater awareness, a skepticism of recipes for liberation? At first glance such a pragmatic attitude means being very aware of where people are coming from since they will often unconsciously promote their positions (rationalize them) and equally explicit about what is wanted. Where is the money coming from, how are we going to spend it, what are we going to do today? It is common particularly in more mystical circles to refuse to discuss in explicit terms, usually on the basis that it isn't spiritual (though that doesn't mean they don't live in such explicit realities). Similarly other hierarchical, non-consensus based systems such as the family refuse to consider these ideas—because options are seen as, and probably are limited. Nonprofits think in terms of fundraising and lobbyists.

From a more theoretical perspective, the meaning of post-ideological existence seems to be:

AN OUTLINE for a disORGANIZATION of DESIRE (O.D.) or (diOde)

1) the alienation (which is ideology) is only tied to symbols as they are necessary—i.e. economic commodities. Anarchy as non-ideology allows a more plastic use of symbols (like Hesse's glass bead game)—but non-elitist (categorical socially)—or the eastern "dance" of images, or deconstructed frolic in the shifting signifiers...Its pragmatic dialectic allows us to be by (requiring/allowing us also not to [if you quit your job, category symbol you find other existences]). We can still have character, spectacle, ideology—but they will be like artifacts in museums or playgrounds—they will not be tied by force of necessity, by economy, to life.

2) Ultimately as much as object/subject is an idealization so is plasticity (just as an "ideology" and an "analysis" of it are artificial categories which are not exclusive or natural to existence): a symbol can almost "alchemically become a thing or subject (as fiction transmutes to life), form becomes content, maps territory, anarchy ideology, and post-ideology possible. Even in the despair over existence and language hope is possible—it lies in the creative dynamic of evolution, in action including new symbolic categories or forms. Quitting a job, playing the anti-hero, critiquing ideology are not the be-all or end-all of the game; there is also innovation, creative evolution. Subjects become or reject labels/being objects/being commodities. Objects become or stop being (valuable) commodities with respect to subject-objects; subjects come into being/or disappear for other subjects (15 minute heroes). Anarchy arises, new subjects revitalize and redefine selves...

(relevant reading: F capra in *The Turning Point* discusses popular bootstrap quantum theory which admits such symbolic transmutation of form/content/interpretation between physical entities and observers. There are still logics, causalities, and things but they are contextual [situationism] and variable. Wittgenstein on logical/symbolic and Einstein on empirical transmutation or contextual reality-form also contribute pieces to this postmodern alchemy: bootstrap allows physical transmutation, and quantum theory of measurement allows subject-object unification. [Unifying this with einstein is the current problem; for E, coordinates {context} {are} matter to some extent, while in QT there is still residual matter/objects—rather than space-time coordinates other methods are the relevant contexts {wave/particle duality}]. Where and what [is] matters. Modern logic allows truth to be both contextual and variable like quantum matter. [Undecidability, transfinite numbers]. Other non-ideologic logic: D Bohm, GS Brown, F Varela, E Fox Keller...Maybe unifying logic with the unified field can clarify the in/determinism perspectives which differ in relativity and QT. String theory is the current favorite but does not provide a better theory of measurement. Unifying the discourses of physics with others may lead to a new aes-

thetic...)

2) Origin of my oppression and desire/why is what is? Still no word on why. Did we come, evolve, self-organize this (shitty) way. Some see history as cycles/dialectics/organic growths. (e.g. U Muller, Fsc Northrup, Toynbee, Sorokin, Spengler...) is there any hope for anarchy—a transition to a different form, non-hierarchical, coercive, cooperative (eg. chalice and blade by R Eisler...evolution of consciousness...transition to "new age") Why did we choose progress through pain route (freud's original sin, the tribe...) where did god, oppressors come from? Why did we create this reality? Was there an initial instability, asymmetry which amplified into present imbalance, maldistribution...? A symmetry breaking instability like that which cascaded into particles and life itself...Maybe we had to develop by tragicomic science sufficient complexity in biophysics and linguistic form to get/realize a disorganization of desire beyond pain, love to join to love, a logic of causality beyond hierarchy and exploitation (a deep social ecology of equality). Was it the only way?

3) Why did we come this way (origin of oppression 3)/is there any way to go (post-ideology) (9). How? Radical opposition vs. reformism (RO v Re) RO is like anarchy, Re is like ideology, what is it what can it be? RO should be as deep as non-ideological symbolic activity. No genuflection. Nor martyrs. Self-conscious and critically radically. Means are ends. (radical opposition as reformism: the obligatory jail sentence holistic and sustainable—begets life, a living movement, a complete diet, meal, perspective...action is not merely reacting, doing something, moving matter, being radical it can be being calm talking thinking...Without borders: mind the body self-conscious of self-consciousness radically critical of being radically critical

15. I would like to participate in instigating study circles, etc. economic collectives... I wonder how many people have to know what "anarchy" means or might mean before we can have it? It is unlikely to be listed as an option in most curricula, culturally literate circles...

Just looked at Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience*—he says least government is best, and none is the logical conclusion. BUT in the meantime you work for the best. A picture of evolving through government, lives of shit, primordial pain to "anarchy." In a new Chomsky release there is an interview with him, in which he says the critical thing is to get a national organization. To me, this problem is not how to institute a new party leading to a new government—which is what we don't need—but how to think about creating some social interactions which do not use these forms. Hence the ideas about disOrganizations. It should be more like professing faith (in noncoercion and cooperation as structural/organization and subsistence possibilities which are valid) values. The U.S. Greens work this angle—but more as ends—not means (so pay dues now). I think if more people just thought about



Collage by Johann Humyn Being (San Francisco, CA.).

how such could be done, we would have it—anarchy happens when enough people in the U.S. know what it means, and not a textbook definition, but the ability to think more about it....

M.M., Washington, D.C.

Not an anarchist

To C.A.L.,

Hey,...Pardon me for eating & writing at the same time. But a friend just brought over donuts. He gets a lot every Thursday night from a girl who works at a (you guessed it) Donut Shop. He gets them free, puts a dozen per brown paper bag, then writes the names of his friends & delivers them right to your door or window as the case may be, like in ours.

Oh well, I'm writing to you to ask for a copy of *Anarchy* #15. I've read about it in *Factsheet Five* #27 & I like what I read....

I'm not an anarchist, but I do agree with a lot of its views. But I also believe that a lot of people misunderstand what anarchy is all about. Running down the street, drunk, kicking garbage cans & screaming "Anarchy in the U.S.A." is not my idea. The funniest one was from a redneck here: "Anarchy?, that's Communist!"

Like I or they said, it's a misunderstood political theme, lifestyle, policy, whatever you want to call it.

My idea on the subject is kinda pessimistic. I can see people living in a peaceful community, every-

body bartering & being cool with each other's stuff. Then along comes a pickup truck full of red-necks with guns, shooting people as they drive down the block. All drunk & screaming 'shit. Also there's a "@" on the door.

Kinda fucked up isn't it. Please instruct me on the real ideas of anarchy and not what the dictionary can come up with?

Politically I'm a borderline socialist, left wing radical, who's peaceful at times but always ready to burn the fires of militant revolt. I'm 100% for the underdog, until he or she becomes an overdog, after which they can go fuck themselves. I despise anyone who has noticeably more than his or her share and isn't cringingly apologetic about it. I hate the smug & the spoiled and I live to see them embarrassed, thwarted and deprived of the things they love. I'm not sure what you could call me, but there's a lot more from where I came from & more just ready to be released.

I put out my own zine, *Nothing is Sacred*. It's an articles/opinion zine which attacks society in a hateful, satirical way....

Well it's getting late & I gotta get up for work. Don't laugh cause I work, at a real job. It's real to me cause I get paid but it ain't real to the government cause it's under the table. I'm 25 & been working since I was 10. I cannot think of any real valuable program that I benefitted from the gov't. And I just say no, when the gov't

is not corrupt (when hell freezes over, if there is a hell or heaven) & they have a good plan to distribute the tax money equally, so it benefits us all equally. Till then, I'm underground.

I'm just really sick of the present state of Democracy! A lot of things are good, but it's just some people who ruin it by greed and fundamentalism. And there is a little guilt in condemning these things & not trying to do something about it. But in their way, they just want your money & your mouth & mind closed. Nuff said.

Later,
W., Raleigh, N.C.

Somewhat of a moralist

Dear Lev,

First off, what a breath of life your publication has given me! I often encourage others to read it. I don't think I'm much of an anarchist, and I'm categorically cynical and critical of any movement of any type—be it political, sociological, religious, ecological, what have you. However, I am impressed at how strongly you cover your bases—you are a first class debater, you are passionate in defending your arguments, and you have a rare personal touch. Although I have found some of the ground covered in *Anarchy* difficult to relate to or integrate into my life, and much of the central theory is a bit obtuse for me (maybe I'd do well to give that more time and energy), I have very much been stimulated by your

articles on sexuality, religion/spirituality, ecology, and others. I also enjoy your media reviews and letter columns. They are very thought provoking.

Because I'm inclined to work on other issues more than anarchy, and these issues seem more urgent to me, I feel that (due to the nature of these issues) I've had to be somewhat of a moralist (of which you seem to have nothing positive to say about in any context), or at very least it has been helpful to manipulate myself to some degree in order to achieve certain goals. My point is I don't see too many future scenarios that don't contain increased human and ecological tragedies due to our over-consumptive habits, ignorance, being out of touch with the rhythms of nature, etc. So, to the extent that I am able I've imposed the moral on myself of not buying into the destructive dominant lifestyles. For example, I try to grow all my own food (yes, in the city—on a rented property at that!), try to avoid power machinery (especially vehicles—even to get out of the urban environment), recycle everything possible, and making the money that I need directly from the land, with a reverence for the land. Oddly enough, I find living this way more liberating than confining. The city is a great place to do all this, because there are unlimited opportunities for recycling what is thrown away, and so many actions can actually be "healing" to the badly damaged city ecology.

It's rare that this can be achieved by living in a rural environment—especially without a motorized vehicle.

In a response to Bill McCormick in issue #22 you stated "the history of moralism, ideology, and religion is essentially the history of human rationalizations for the progressive domination and destruction of ourselves, our communities, and our natural world. Until this radical truth is finally understood and given its true weight, we'll continue to be entertained by self-contradictory eco-ideologues demanding that we suppress and dominate one part of nature in order to 'liberate' other parts." Perhaps I need to understand what your definition of moralism is, but it seems to me that the moral of respecting earth and its inhabitants is terribly important, and anyone who cares for the fate of our planet, be they a primitive person witnessing the invasion of his/her environment by destructive world-dominant society forces or an American city-dweller as myself who sees countless destructive atrocities each day, may find it beneficial to teach these morals to others—especially if they are so blinded by the trappings of dominant society that they may miss seeing there could be a better way. In practice, it's best not to come off as being too moralistic to most people—few people enjoy being preached at—but to feed them the information so that they feel like

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Letters

Somewhat of a moralist

Continued from previous page

they are coming up with it on their own (hopefully they are!), and perhaps showing them by example some ways they can make a difference in their own lives. I'm not trying to be particularly self-congratulatory; even within the limited context of what I'm trying to do, and the more limited context of what I've stated here, I've got a long way to go. It's just that this is so important. If we don't straighten out our material trip on this planet, all the social, political, and spiritual theory is meaningless if there is no life on this planet. So my moral is we all need to do our part and be open to things we can do. If the shit ever does hit the fan, the survivors will likely be the ones in tune with nature.

I know much of what I've said is out of the scope of anarchism, but these issues come up often in your paper, and I felt compelled to state my views.

In deep respect for your project,
S.J., Albuquerque, N.M.

Lev responds:

Desire or guilt

Thanks for your kind words regarding this journal. By writing such a thoughtful and enquiring letter I think you've made an important contribution to this project. You've shown how, without stridency or denunciations, one can call everything we've been saying in this journal into question in such a way as to invite deeper dialogue rather than requiring superficial defenses. I respect that greatly. So, in a similar spirit, let me attempt to restate my criticism of morality in another fashion.

As I said at a workshop during the Summer '88 California Earth First Rendezvous, those who would like to constitute a successful movement to end the progressive degradation and destruction of nature have two basic choices for directions that may be travelled. We can attempt to base a movement to "save the earth" on feelings of guilt that can be evoked in people—because they are a part of humanity and humanity is responsible for the ecological crisis. Or we can attempt to base a movement to liberate nature—ourselves included—on the destruction and suppression of all the repressive apparatus of civilization which have led to our increasing alienation from nature. In other words, we can base this movement negatively on how horrible people are (some form of original sin), and how our appetites must be curbed even more than they already are by the constraints of civilization; or we can base it positively on overthrowing the constraints of civilization which have subdued our wildness and our fundamental identification with the rest of nature. One road demands our submission to an ideal of a nature from which we are excluded (one way or another). The other road invites participation through the lure of a vision of personal and social liberation which intimately embraces the liberation of nature from the ravages of human alienation. At root the difference is between an authoritarian vision of a wild humanity that needs to be tamed and a libertarian vision of an alienated and domesti-



"Confrontation" (from the Radioactive Bacon series, Nevada Test Site, April 1989) Scott Yoos, Olympia, WA.

cated humanity which still yearns for liberation.

It seems to me that morality occupies a central place within the punitive, authoritarian vision of ecological salvation. If a voracious humanity is the primary problem, the goal becomes the muzzling and suppression of humanity. Since the reified "Nature" of the authoritarian ecologists is unlikely to achieve the suppression of humanity on its own, it becomes necessary for ecologists to devise ways of convincing people to suppress their own "evil" natures for the "greater good" of "Nature" understood as everything outside humanity. The rationalizations will vary, but their content remains the same: people's desires are evil or destructive and violate the laws of God, or Nature, or Spirit, or Ecology, therefore people's desires must be subordinated to an idealized concept of God, Nature, Spirit, Ecology. And, of course, the ultimate threat always remains: if people don't suppress their own desires, eventually an authoritarian political apparatus in the control of ecologists will have to do it for them. If Nature doesn't take its own revenge on humanity, then eventually the custodians of morality on earth will be forced to undertake a reign of ecological terror in order to "restore the balance of Nature" themselves. This ultimate threat may not be explicit in moralistic approaches to social change, but it always lies implicitly below the surface. No matter how "libertarian" it might be claimed a form of morality is supposed to be, the logic behind it always leads eventually in an explicitly authoritarian direction. And this type of authoritarian/moralistic ecological vision isn't very appealing to me.

The alternative vision assumes that humanity is an integral part of nature which has no need of being forced to reconcile itself to the demands of the rest of nature. Instead, the primary problem is seen as the progressive personal, natural and social alienation which has been a necessary product of the growth of authoritarian civilization. In other words, it sees that people have been forced throughout history to increasingly divide themselves, and to separate themselves from other people and from nature. The libertarian

vision assumes, not original sin, but rather that people are "naturally" in tune with each other and the rest of nature such that they had to be torn, kicking and screaming all the way, from their original ways of life by the process of civilization. One has only to examine the real history of authoritarian institutions to see that they always had to be imposed through great force applied to recalcitrant communities before they were finally grudgingly accepted. Often their acceptance was only conditioned on the near genocide of the communities that were subjugated.

In the case of your own use of the words "moral" and "morality," their definitions are not necessarily clear. People can mean different things when they use ambiguous words, and philosophically & politically contested words are always ambiguous by the very fact that they are contested. Although, for the sake of consistency (and thus understanding), I use the word "morality" in one particular way in these pages, it can certainly be used properly to mean other things. As always, the most important part of communication is the meaning involved behind the particular words which are used to convey that meaning, and not that particular words must be used in particular ways—though this latter can often become an important requirement of former. Assigning a particular meaning to a word in a particular context becomes especially important when people are all too willing to take advantage of the multiple meanings of contested words to confuse matters rather than clarify them discussions. If you are indeed "cynical and critical of any movement," you'll undoubtedly understand what I mean by this.

Generally, when people use the word morality, they explicitly or implicitly mean to prescribe an abstract system of right and wrong values. And most any system of right and wrong values by its nature has a central value around which all the others are subordinate—usually logically so. Thus most monotheistic religious moralities have a central value—the reverence of God—around which the rest of their values are organized. Ecological moralities usually place the Earth or Nature at their center in a similar way. But

whatever the central value, the expectation is that people must uncritically subordinate their own desires and lives to it if they are going to be moral. The assumption is always that the values of the morality are more real and true than those felt by the individual her or himself. In other words people must trick themselves into believing that the central value of a system of morality is really more important to them than any other desires they could possibly have. Psychologically speaking, the primary motivation for people accepting moralities in this sense, is guilt. And those who purvey moralities of any kind automatically zero in on people's feelings of inadequacy and guilt in their attempts to convince them adopt their moralities. In this sense morality is always a con-game manipulating and exploiting people's weaknesses; it's certainly not liberatory in any way.

The libertarian alternative to attempts at manipulating and exploiting people's guilt, fears and weaknesses through moralism, is to appeal to their own desires and dreams. Rather than blaming individuals for the massive ecological destruction perpetrated by capitalist civilization in order to con them into adopting a reified idea of Nature as their new god, it makes more sense to speak directly to people's deepest desires to live their lives freely and expansively. This means communicating our criticisms of how ecological destruction degrades our own lives. This means sharing our own experience of oneness with the rest of nature with those who haven't yet experienced it. And this means encouraging people to take an active part in creating their lives according to their desires rather than continuing to allow their lives to be defined by authorities, ideologues, moralists and the consumption of industrial commodities. Individual decisions to reduce commodity consumption, to recycle and to grow one's own food need not be forced by adherence to a moral creed which demands them. In fact, they will be much more easily and naturally accepted when they are seen to express one's actual positive desires to live more freely and directly. But beyond this, from a libertarian perspective individual decisions like these can be seen as

less important strategically than the central decision to heal our social alienation and accept nature within and without us, since the underlying problem out of which our present ecological crisis grew will never be overcome by individual moral decisions. It can only be healed through a social movement which replaces the repressive institutions of civilization with a libertarian society of untamed humans living in federated ecocommunities. Although a moralistic, authoritarian ecological strategy may succeed in ameliorating the destruction of the rest of nature, it would at the same time depend on the continued degradation of our own human nature. It should be obvious that such a self-contradictory project holds far less promise than a libertarian ecological strategy which promises to address all of nature—human and non-human—with a vision of liberation.

Quotes on religion?

To the editor,

The following quotes from great past anarchists may shed some light in the ongoing and often tiresome debate in your publication on religion and anarchy:

- 1) "Our crime? Our refusal to accept the authority of any Gods in heaven or on Earth. 'Neither God nor Master!' is our motto."
- 2) "It was on the steps of the Church that I shot the fattest capitalist of the place without compunction. I can't remember his name now, and I couldn't care less...."

An anarchist
in Thompson Falls, MT.

Questionnaire replacement

Dear Lev,

This letter is a replacement for the questionnaire that appeared in the paper a few months ago.

I feel *Anarchy* is an excellent publication that gives me inspiration and education every time I pick it up. Why do I feel this way? Because you speak your mind (1), (2) you address ideological issues in a clear manner, (3) your letters section is as good as (or better than) the articles section, and (4) you have made me think about how I deal politically with people, especially when libertarian/freedom questions and real life situations arise.

If there is anything I'd like to see more of it's news of the development of worker-based anarchist news—from the U.S. and other nations. (I do receive this from the *Libertarian Labor Review*). Also, the approach and response of anarchist ideals and history among the U.S. oppressed nationalities (African-Americans, Latinos, Asians, Alaskan-Natives, Native People), and women. The question of anarchist history and ideas, too, particularly the situationists (bravo!! to the current article), would be helpful.

I feel lonely being a former "cadre," now a developing anarchist, but I am proud, too, and will take your words of caution about being too easily seduced by the traditional leftist myths, which is itself something good to write more on so we can learn from



others how to avoid the errors others made and make.

To this end I am renewing my support for *Anarchy* with twice monthly contributions of \$5, beginning with this letter. Let the first 2 go toward my sub, then the rest toward sustaining, or just a consistent supporter. We'll disagree and fight, but I'll still love you all anyway...because you are doing the good work. Let's work a little more diligently to turn "you all" into "we."

Something else I'd like to hear from others involves how they relate socially, i.e. sharing anarchist ideas with social and work friends, and also the whole deal with relationships outside of the

anarchist community.

After reading the reports from the gathering it was disappointing to not hear some criticism (or comments) on the whole security concern regarding anarchist mailings/literature. As I have written to you before, I feel at times as if my requests for info or signs of solidarity are rejected or rebuffed for inconsequential reasons. But no one said this struggle would be easy, either.

Yours,
J., North Carolina

[Thanks much for your support! What do you readers think? Would anyone like to address some of these questions?—Lev]

Letters on

"Anarchy & the sacred"

I believe in God

Dear Anarchy,

Well! How refreshing! Please sign me up immediately for a plain brown wrapper subscription—not for incognito purposes, but because the mails are slow enough as is without every Postal Obfuscator between here and Missouri predegrading my copy for me. Also please send back issues #19 & #22—I want to see what all the fuss is about....

A few relevant comments, if I may. While I don't necessarily disagree with Joe Peacock's article on AIDS [see *Anarchy* #24, p.14], I've watched with some bemusement various televised forums on the subject where medical experts—mostly directors of hospitals with AIDS wings—have gone on and on most reassuringly about how difficult it would be to contract the disease through casual contact or "safe sex," yet when asked about the precautions took at their facilities, invariably replied, "the same as for any other highly infectious disease, such as hepatitis." Similarly, AIDS researchers who spill a sample are required to disinfect their work surfaces with an astonishing array of acids and industrial solvents—stopping just short of burning the fucker, actually—and yet, as we all know, you categorically cannot catch AIDS from a toilet seat! The truth is, the gay lobby has so politicized the disease that approaching it as a public health issue is impossible; it has become instead a civil rights issue. That's understandable, gays have a hard enough time of it as is without adding fresh fuel to homophobic fires, but let's not forget that the chief result of such activity is to increase the number of entities to whom one is beholden.

Concerning "Anarchy & the sacred" [see *Anarchy* #24, p.18]—I believe in God, the passion of women, the self-awareness of plants, the planting of trees, the wheel of karma, and howling at the moon. At the same time, I reject all systems of religious thought, be they Judeo-Christian, New Age, Eastern, or whatever. God by definition is beyond con-

ceptualization; attempts to do so merely supply a figurehead, a lifeless cardboard icon, for the latest program. And yet there's all this LIFE, this astonishing array, a near infinite complexity. Evolution as a sole explanation is just another organized religion and requires a greater leap of faith than most. Gaia, the Tao, and the idea behind Yahweh's question to Jeremiah, "Am I not a god who fills the heavens and earth?" seem a bit closer to the mark.

The "real counter-tradition" espoused by you is really just plain old rationalism in the emperor's new clothes—at heart is the idea that there is nothing else anywhere, and no other dimension of life, but that which we can see, touch, taste, weigh, and examine. But rejection of Deity rarely obviates the human longing for Deity—the usual result, as in your essay and elsewhere, is instead the deification of humanity itself, a by-your-bootstraps approach to tomorrow's Brave New World. The poverty of this line of thinking is illustrated by your reliance on the possibility of its existence in primitive cultures as a form of proof while simultaneously decrying Dogbane Campion's use of a similar ploy. Anthropology—the study of humanity—as the salvation of humanity is as implausible as any other religion, and furthermore overlooks a fundamental truth: that what works for the members of a primitive culture, be it shamanistic or anarchistic, works within their culture. It is not something we can appropriate for our own use, as we have their lands and livelihoods, but rather an integral part of a social technology we can never fully understand nor assimilate. The native in his village believes in his love and his shaman-priest; we in our cities and ivory towers rationalize, research, and conjecture various scientific/rationalist or new-ageist/metaphysical underpinnings for his belief but never, ever break free enough from our own cultural assumptions to participate in his.

There is no god but God, and we have never known Him.

Sincerely,
T.P., Spokane, WA.

Lev responds:

The need for religion is the need for police

Thanks for writing and subscribing. Regarding your comments on AIDS, I think you may be misunderstanding the meaning of the words "highly infectious" when applied in different contexts. Apparently AIDS is fairly infectious given direct exposure of HIV-carrying body fluids to another person's bloodstream. However, what is officially meant by "casual contact" hardly counts as direct exposure in most cases. When "AIDS researchers...spill a sample," what they spill may be, by many orders of magnitude, much more dangerous than a specimen of unaltered blood from someone diagnosed with AIDS. To take another example you mention, Hepatitis B is generally claimed to be much, much more highly infectious than AIDS, yet there have been no suggestions of which I'm aware to quarantine Hepatitis carriers, nor excessive worries about "toilet seats," etc. And, by the way, a hell of a lot of people die from hepatitis and its sequelae around the world.

Regarding your comments on religion, I find it odd that so many people claim that "God" is "beyond conceptualization," but insist on conceptualizing what is "beyond conceptualization" in religious terms anyway! The very word "God" already contains an entire metaphysics in its denotations and connotations. And the fanatical insistence on preserving the use of this word, means to me that those who say that "God is beyond conceptualization" really don't believe this.

Evolution as it is usually conceptualized (i.e. scientifically) may not be a convincing "sole explanation" for "all this life," but the problem as I see it is primarily the strange demand for a "sole explanation" itself, and not the difficulty—really the impossibility—of determining which finite story might be best construed as a final answer for such a cosmic question. It should be needless to say that I've never advocated the "sole explanation" of life through any conceptual system. But, of course, you who believe in religions (systematic or unsystematic) can't quite seem to imagine that people really exist who don't feel any need to possess final, reified "answers" to such questions. The "real counter-tradition" I spoke of in my essay on "The cult of the sacred" will thus probably remain incomprehensible to you. Your attempt to stuff the skeptical/anarchic counter-tradition into your little box labelled "rationalism" ignores what I've already explicitly said many times—that I'm not attempting to legislate the boundaries of reality. I don't draw artificial limits on what we can experience and attempt to enforce them; on the contrary this is the explicit strategy of metaphysical rationalists of all kinds, whether they are believers in religion or science. Instead, I am interested in pointing out the alienating nature of all attempts (including yours) to impose dualist conceptions of reality on yourself and others. My rejection of the concept of God is just that, a rejection of the particular uses this concept is usually put to. It is not a rejection of the experienced and lived reality which concepts can never fully explain.

The fact that I've never attempted to deify humanity makes your baseless statement to this effect ludicrous! Nor have I anywhere relied on anthropology for any sort of "proof" as you state. It should have been fairly clear that I was in fact criticizing such uses of anthropology precisely because of its obvious limits. The fact that I pointed out that there may in time emerge a non-religious revisionism within anthropology in no way means that I think this could "prove" me right. The limits of any anthropology will still remain. Beyond this, I also remain relatively unconvinced by your seemingly arbitrary "fundamental truth: that what works for the members of a primitive culture..., works within their culture [and] is not something we can appropriate for our own use." The fact that we may never "fully" understand or assimilate something from another culture doesn't mean that we can't partially succeed. The implications of your position—that cultures are hermetically sealed, completely incommensurate and dissociated from each other—just don't make sense to me. If this was so we could never understand anything from any other culture at all, and this seems hardly to be true!

It seems to me that your statement regarding "Deity" would more truthfully reveal your meaning if it were rephrased as "rejection of authority rarely obviates the human longing for authority." There is no God for those who aren't afraid to live without reified concepts. To paraphrase the lyrics of a song by the Detroit band, The Layabouts, "The need for religion...is the need for police."

"Primal vision"

In the last issue [*Anarchy* #24, p.19], Dogbane Campion defends "the sacred" in a very idealist way, via a string of quotes about societies that were already at the religious stage. Spiritual formulations and practices, like the rest of human activity, must take into account their social bases e.g. division of labor and domestication of animals and/or plants.

Rather than examine these societies, which exhibited such marvelous qualities as hierarchy, suppression of women, and war, Campion merely venerates them. But then his main point is that the only alternative to unquestioning acceptance of whatever he chooses to call the sacred is unquestioning acceptance of the modern industrial world-view.

My opinion is that a "primal vision" necessarily preceded the stage of ritual and religion. It seems clear that the shaman was the first specialist and thus represents a backward step from an earlier wholeness based on absence of division of labor. If religion is a retreat from the communion with the world that apparently obtained before specialized existence, it is a serious mistake to treat it as unquestioned truth and authority.

Symbolic activity is not an authority I wish to elevate or preserve, but Campion has no such reservations. In fact, he even speaks of early Christianity as essentially positive and seems to lament that creating a new religion would probably be unsuccessful!

Religion, in my view, is every bit as oppressive as the estranged outlook of high technology. Campion's contrary view may be reflective of Fifth Estate's embrace of ecumenical symbolic protest and lack of criticism of New Age morism, as well as its reluctance to situate its "primitivism" vis-à-vis the foundations of alienation (division of labor and domestication).

John Zerzan, Eugene, OR.

Humans not central to life

Dear Lev,

I read the exchange on "the sacred" with interest. It's a thorny issue. I agree in principle with your rejection of Campion's apparent veneration of what Joseph Campbell called "the numinous"—the capacity for awe and wonder, so difficult to distinguish from habits of fearfulness and submission.

You describe animism as a concept of human kinship with other living beings, then move quickly to its religious transmutation, the attribution of "spiritual" essences to living beings.

The capacity to recognize that humans are not central to life, but are just one life form, is a philosophical approach that deserves more attention from both you and Campion. Whatever the varied religious, political, and social forms taken by preliterate or traditional cultures, few that I know of succeeded in trashing the environment and depleting resources needed for human life as effectively as literate/civilized groups have done. (This is a highly summary statement that would take years to document, of course.)

People who have studied "pre-contact" Indian groups (by means of archaeological evidence, early EuroAmerican accounts, and Indian oral histories) hypothesize that much of the North American environment was "managed." For example, controlled burning kept grasslands open, ensuring the prevalence of wild root and seed plants. Some fallen trees and driftwood were used to make plank houses and canoes.

Robert Heizer said of the Indians of California, "One took what he needed and expressed appreciation rather than acting as though what was valuable in the way of food and materials was simply there for the taking. Without these attitudes the California Indians could have laid waste to California long before the Europeans appeared."

Best regards,
A.C., Eugene, OR.

Lev comments:

Live your desires

Thank you very much for mentioning these points. Unfortunately, most people—conditioned to see everything only in terms of conventional dualities—seem to find it very hard to imagine how people can live without dedicating their lives to either gods or science. In my relatively short essay on "The cult of the sacred" I wish I had been able to devote more space to discussing the nature of non-religious, non-ideological thinking and its implications for living. Perhaps I'll be able to do this

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Letters

Live your desires

Continued from previous page

in another essay in a future issue, but for now I'd just like to clarify a few things.

In my own life, when I experience feelings of awe or wonder for natural phenomena, I do not feel any need to venerate these phenomena, nor do I feel any need to ascribe them—as effects—to any sort of reified conceptions of "spiritual," "supernatural" or "scientific" authors or causes. For me, it is sufficient to experience them, and perhaps to express these experiences on occasion. I have no desire—as others often seem to assume I must—to suppress my experiences or feelings in this regard. Beyond this, I have no objections to the poetic, metaphorical expression of such experiences. What I find objectionable is the transmutation of such expressions into the fixed images of metaphysical or religious categories. Strip away the rationalist, metaphysical assumptions from just about any religious or scientific discourse, and I can appreciate its poetry (to whatever extent it is poetic).

From my perspective I also feel no need to raise human life, or any other reified conceptions of humanity, above the rest of the natural world. You are correct to point out that "the capacity to recognize that humans are not central to life, but are just one life form, is a philosophical" issue, and thus not a metaphysical or religious principle which demands our submission. The latter are almost always mistaken for the former by biocentrists, "deep" ecologists, etc. Not content to remain on a terrain of discussion in which we can speak to each other as relative equals with respect, deep biocentric ideologists insist on talking down to us from their pulpits in the name of Nature (or Gaia, or God) preaching submission to their interpretations of whichever holy scriptures they venerate. Those of us with a bit more humility would never dream of claiming privileged access to the commands of Nature, Gaia or God (or other reified conceptions of the natural world). Once people give up the ridiculous appeals to authority, to reified concepts and to ideology as you have, a space is opened up for genuine human discourse.

Once we've reached this point, then I am quite interested in speaking of ecological and philosophical values—values which aren't etched in stone, but which remain flexible expressions of our lives, our communion with other people and the natural world. So, yes, let's bring the discussion of our present social/ecological crisis back down to Earth. I feel a great affinity for (non-religious) animist perspectives. I do not believe that humanity is central to life conceived on a cosmic scale (nor do I believe that humanity is subordinate to other forms of life), though the remnants of human community I've experienced do seem to be rather central to my own life. I do think it is valuable to express appreciation for the natural gifts which sustain our lives. However, I think each person must come to feel such things for themselves from within their own experience in communion with their own worlds. The human discussion of ecological ethics can be valuable. The preaching of ecological morality—which is where

most eco-radicals get bogged down—is worse than useless. Let us learn from nature and from what remains of primitive cultures. But let us learn without fetishizing them, without killing what is still alive in them.

I'd rather be a clown

Dogbane Campion, in the section on "Anarchy & the sacred," seems to be arguing that by making the world sacred (presumably excluding factories), we would end alienation and all forms of authoritarian/technological destructiveness. Dogbane's model is (a perception of) certain non-technological societies. Oddly, he centers his arguments around the proto-hierarchy in such societies, the bruja/brujo. Most classic anthropological literature seems to me to indicate that the brujo (they are mainly men, at least these days) is the most likely person in primitive society to become an established authority. They also are obviously the most alienated people in these societies: its discontented loners.

Instead of teaching everyone the secrets of healing, brujos withhold the secrets. They tell stories that are at best true in an allegorical sense; at worst, they are self-serving lies. They are, at best, well meaning con artists. Hardly a model for anarchists.

However, Dogbane's obvious longing to be a bruja (an authority on being against authority?) does not in itself negate the arguments about the sacred or alienation. Dogbane says, "While the rationalist may try to stand back from events to see an objective view, the shaman participates in them." If the shaman were like everyone else in the tribe, if he could enjoy the trees and ants for what they are, if he could participate in reality, he would not need an alternative reality. The shaman's problem is that he does not participate fully in reality. I've known carpenters, domestic workers, plumbers and other ordinary people who participate fully in reality. But that does not mean that they don't get angry at some situations they encounter. It doesn't mean they don't feel pain when a fly bites them.

Sacred? I'll settle for people accepting the world as real. The basis of nationalism, racism, classism, patriarchy, is refusing to accept certain types of people as really being people. The central tenet of Judaism and its offshoots, as well as Hinduism and its offshoots, is that the world is not real.

Once the world is accepted as real, we can move on to finding ways of living in it which make us happy (does unalienated equate to happy?).

Lev Chernyi undertakes a more interesting task in seeking a "real countertradition." But before exploring it, let me state my history and compare this project to the one that preceded it. This is the project of "purifying" science and technology, and is quite analogous to Dogbane's attempt to purify religion. Some anarchists do not believe it is such a hopeless task, as a look at *The Match!* would indicate.

My parents tried to bring me up to be both religious (Catholic) and capable of working with science (I

was a Sputnik kid). I hated religion. I still hate religion. But, I know far more about it, both the various theologies and the factual histories of religions, than anyone I have ever met who is religious.

For a long time my take on things was that science and technology are good in themselves; it was only that they were put to use by minds warped by religion and greed and power that has put us in the mess we are in. I still reject the view that human civilization was less screwed up before the 16th century than today, because of the quantitative capacity we have achieved through science and technology.

But that is too shallow of a viewpoint, given the facts. Suppose the anarchists in 1850 had destroyed authorities, government, religion, patriarchy, etc. They liked technology, however, and continued to use and improve it, and to develop the sciences. The population would have continued to grow. Probably the atomic bomb would not have been invented, and certainly it never would have been mass produced. However, I guarantee you that someone would have invented CFCs and realized they made the ideal, environmentally safe refrigerant. Tomatoes from Mexico in March, 75°F inside when it's 110°F outside, arm your desires, who could resist it? And about 50 to 100 years later some grad student doing his Ph.D. thesis on upper atmospheric chemistry would realize that the ozone layer was being destroyed, and that even if all CFC use stopped immediately the world was in for massive ecological destruction. (Now my anarcho-syndicalist comrades can label me a Luddite.)

Is it integrating or alienating to know that the mind is supported in a bunch of neurons, and that memory is stored in a holographic manner, spread out among billions of neurochemical synapses?

Those who would purify science, or rationality, reject dogma posing as science, and want technology to meet human needs, not vice versa. A worthy project, but at some point it has to recognize that technology shapes human needs even as it meets them. The project is insufficient.

Still, science has some advantages over religion. If someone says "women have no souls," there is no way to convince that person otherwise. Faith can be shaken, but only to the extent that the faithful are interested in what is real. If a person with a scientific outlook says, "women are stupider than men," they can be made to agree in advance to an experiment that tests this proposition and proves it false. Science, in its pure form, recognizes reality. And most of the real scientists, the ones who are not academic posers or glorified technicians and butchers, treat life as something sacred.

Lev equates sacredness with faith. I think sacredness is a more elusive concept than faith. Faith is dangerous for those of us who are alienated when we are not free to think. But it is quite possible to be lacking in faith, to be totally cynical, and still be alienated. By equating sacredness with faith Lev is able to say "which faith?" Must we all worship the Goddess? The sun?

But from the point of view of personally feeling alienated, faith is not so bad. I've observed many people who to me seem alienated

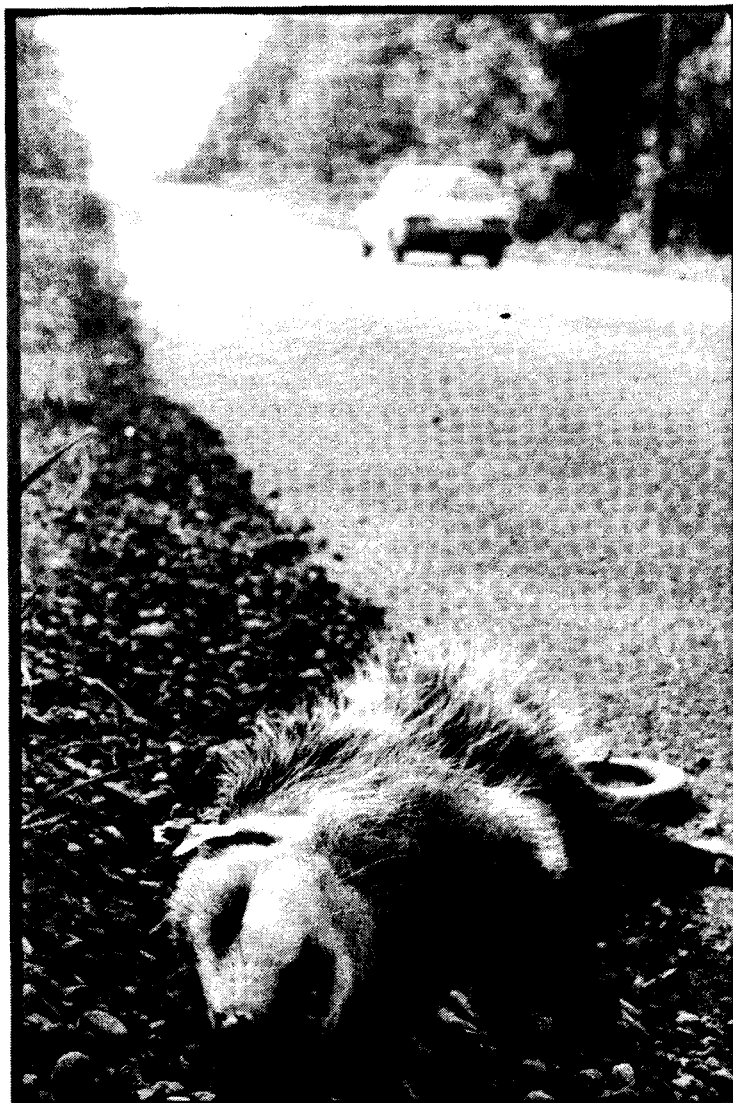
because of their faith, but they were happy: it acted as a shield to protect them from reality, it allowed them to feel integrated in what they should have recognized as an alien environment. This, in fact, seems to be what Dogbane is proposing. He thinks he has discovered, in "sacredness" and hunter/gatherer societies, a better kind of faith. He has reasoned this out. Based on my experience, I'd rather be alienated and faithless, with the door open to participation in the world, than integrated by faith.

So now I am ready to consider the real countertradition, that cares for no form of authority. To a large extent this may require rejecting industrial society. But the biting flies and occasional human diseases and chance mishaps are still there. So is the joy of sexual love and parental love and sisterly love and tribal love and love of nature and love of the cosmos. But am I allowed to read a book? Is it OK to write a book about the influence of 7th century B.C. Egyptian technology on the evolution of Phrygian poetry? Is it OK to cut open an animal killed by nature and try to decipher how its lungs work and relate to its blood supply? Or is it only OK to look at its entrails and prophesy whether fishing will be good next week? If we traditionally hoe the land, can I try plowing it instead, or is that leading down the slippery road to McDonalds? If Dogbane wants to take hallucinogens and fly in imagination, should I sharpen my knife because his experiment, I believe, will lead eventually to the Inquisition?

Lev is right, we anarchists still have a lot to explore, but I don't think it is entirely a question of reconstruction of this real countertradition. Reality creates, over and over again, certain dramas: the creation of a species and its extinction, the restlessness of the young and the wisdom of the aged, the erection of authority and its casting down. We, all anarchists, including people who are anarchists and have never heard of the term, are the real countertradition. If every single one of us were killed tomorrow, in a week reality will have created more anarchists. It is the nature of some of us to talk and argue, to experiment with everything from street fights to odd systems of friendship to attempted recreations of primitive cultures to communication by fax. We have a long way to go, but at least we, as a group, are on the path.

I don't think it is possible to abolish social alienation. I would no more abolish alienation than mosquitoes or cockroaches. But I would like to abolish the establishment that has turned this world into a hell where most people are alienated most of the time from nature, other people, and their own capabilities as human beings. To fully experience the joy of integration, you have to have experienced alienation. But please, in small doses.

[Note: the name & address of the author of this letter have unfortunately been misplaced]



"A Sacrifice to the Car Gods" (Olympia, Oct. 1988) Scott Yoos, Olympia, WA.



Lev comments:

Reality isn't scientific

Thanks for your contribution to this discussion. I'd just like to comment on a few of your points:

1) Dogbane's conception of "participation" in the world is by definition something that a modern carpenter—or any other person whose life consists largely of wage-slavery in an industrial society—is hardly likely to experience.

2) I doubt that the desire to explore unusual dimensions of "reality" is in itself an expression of alienation; it is the compulsion to live as if a highly abstract conceptual interpretation of the world (whether religious or scientific) is more real than one's own lived experience that is alienating.

3) Your speculations about an anarchist society developing as a technological, eco-destructive society hide the assumptions you make that any genuinely successful anarchist society would be compatible with the widespread use of mass-production—presumably in factories (through use of wage-labor, or even voluntary, industrial non-wage slavery?). Would genuinely free people voluntarily exchange their freedom for the minor comforts provided by submission to an industrial megamachine? I really doubt it!

4) Science per se "recognizes reality" no more than religions do. Belief in science (scientism) has just as much potential as belief in religion for the dehumanization of persons not valued by those in positions of power. If "a person with a scientific outlook" says that "human beings are just a bunch of chemicals arranged as a self-organized system," what experiments are going to scientifically "prove" him/her wrong? Scientific bases can and have been used to justify racism, sexism, etc. Your own belief in science seems to be blinding you to the dehumanization and alienation inherent in its perverse reductionism.

5) Cynicism is hardly the opposite of faith in religion or scientism, as you would imply. And just because people can succeed to a degree in hiding the symptoms of their alienation from themselves doesn't mean that they are necessarily happy. In my experience a "happy, religious person" is an oxymoron. Most of those who take religion seriously, have rather obvious problems, whether they realize it or not.

Rebellion is iconoclastic

Hi Lev,

I'd like to make some comments about the dialogue on the sacred, and then ask for a couple of favors from *Anarchy* readers.

Rereading Dogbane's response to you and (to a slight extent) me reinforced my feelings about the impoverishment of the thought inherent in belief in the sacred—he often seems to think he only needs to state something to make it so, with no argumentation or analysis and occasionally he contradicts himself without realizing it. Though he claims there's nothing logically absurd about calling everything sacred, he needs to distinguish ants from ants to create the sacred—obviously everything isn't sacred.

He says that "the world of ants has been burned at the stake"—

seeming to forget that burning at the stake has always been a punishment meted out by believers in the sacred against those who reject their concept of the sacred.

He also equates desacralizing with degrading the world into "energy and resources." But what is sacred ritual if not a psychological technology for using the resource of "spiritual" energy in things. Ritual is work, productive activity. And the sacred a resource of spiritual energy. Just examine any ritual—unlike play, but like work and production, all have a purpose and an end for which they aim. So it could be argued that making something sacred degrades it into energy and resources.

Dogbane's argument is based on a fetishizing of the primitive. While examining primitive cultures is worthwhile, a critique of technology and civilization does not necessarily imply a desire to live as any particular primitive culture or even as generalized primitive culture. I desire something new, something which, to my knowledge, has never existed, and I certainly desire no "sacredness" in the world I envision.

It is interesting to me that anarchic rebels of the past have usually recognized their rebellion as inherently iconoclastic. They recognized that (usually) unconsciously accepted sacredness was the basis for all authority and that their war against authority was against the sacred—that all idols need to be smashed. The present tendency of certain radicals to try to wed anarchic rebellion to the sacred is a step backwards. What we need to do is expand the attack on the sacred to areas in which it has not previously been recognized—the intense, critical questioning of everything we know. The sacred tries to define our lives for us. If we are to be the creators of our own lives, we need to arm ourselves with the iconoclast's sledgehammer that can smash every idol and destroy the sacred.

Now, for the two favors I'd like to ask. I received a few anti-authoritarian 'zines from Greece in the mail. I would like to have them translated into English. Any help would be greatly appreciated. Also, I want to read the *Digger Papers* from the '60s. I'll gladly pay postage and photocopying costs to anyone who can send me a copy. Thanks!

Take care,
Feral Faun

1369 Haight St.
San Francisco, CA. 94117

On *Anarchy & Ecstasy*:
Reprehensible review

I would be very grateful if you would print an unedited version of the enclosed letter in the next issue of Anarchy. Sorry it goes over your specified length limit of two single-spaced, typewritten pages, but I have a number of important points to make. Any attempt at editing will be construed as a refusal to engage in the dialogue you claim to encourage.

Dear Lev Chernyi,

I feel that some kind of public reply must be made to your review of my text, *Anarchy & Ecstasy*, in

the November/December 1989 issue of *Anarchy*. I am not averse to constructive and informed criticism, but when a reviewer systematically misrepresents my ideas no recourse remains open except to offer a corrective. And in this case, as I intend to demonstrate, you have so thoroughly distorted the import of my text through selective misreading that it almost remains beyond recognition. Whether or not you personally misunderstand my thought remains immaterial to me, but I am concerned that your readership might be deterred from considering my work through your misleading misinterpretation of it. You seem to have missed the point; I must now ensure that your readers do not make the same mistake.

The main charge levelled against me contends on the one hand that I am a religious ideologue seeking converts, and on the other hand that consequently I am not an authentic revolutionary anarchist, but merely a purveyor of "an ideological simulation of rebellion." Both parts of this accusation are blatantly untrue, as any vaguely accurate reading of my text would reveal. Religion is explicitly repudiated in a passage in which I assert: "Intrinsically, religion—which the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines as 'human recognition of superhuman controlling power and especially of a personal God entitled to obedience'—remains anathema to anarchists. The two elements of this formulation, the emphasis on a superior control force and on unthinking obedience, are clearly unacceptable" (p.10). After proceeding to detail in brief some of what I term the "obscurities" of religion, I state: "Given this legacy, the repudiation of religion hardly appears surprising. Nevertheless, the necessity remains for proponents of anarchy to reclaim what, for want of a better word, and despite its antipathetic connotations, can only be termed spirituality. This is necessary if anarchy is to become the integral praxis so manifestly required." (ibid). Here a crucial distinction is drawn between religion and spirituality. In the review these terms are unfortunately used as synonyms, but in the text they are clearly not interchangeable. Religion denotes a repressive, institutionalized distortion of those antinomian, holistic experiential tendencies signified by spirituality. The former remains a key weapon in the arsenal of the control complex, whereas the latter could (in my opinion, should) inform and inspire total revolution. As I remark regarding my intentions in the volume: "I am interested in delineating some spiritual techniques which may aid and promote an anarchic revolution. We require, not theology, nor even liberation theology, but a spiritual

therapeutics that prefigures and participates in the social shift toward anarchy" (ibid).

It is at this juncture that the issue of Zen becomes pertinent. Immediately following the passage just quoted I go on to say: "Such emancipatory techniques can, I believe, be adapted from the praxis of Zen" (ibid). Note the use of the word *adapted*, it will recur. "Religious mystifications" are not being peddled here. I clearly state: "Obviously, as long as such techniques remain enmeshed in the struggle for total liberation" (p.12). Having said this, however, I note: "Zen techniques, adapted and recontextualized within anarchic praxis, possess an immense liberatory potential. Of course, they are not sufficient in themselves to precipitate the total revolution toward anarchy. All I have proposed here needs to be complemented by the ideas of theorists like Bookchin and Perlman, and the practice of communities in the process of liberating themselves" (p.13, my emphases). Fantasies about anarcho-Zen "cadres"—your word, not mine: watch out! your Marxist petticoat is showing—as assaulting the State remain inappropriate here. Quite clearly, rather than attempting to rehabilitate Zen, I am trying to effect a critical incorporation of some of its more beneficent aspects into an anarchic praxis which could be enriched thereby.

This procedure can only be misconstrued as "an ill-conceived attempt to convert anarchists to... Zen 'spirituality'" through a hopelessly inadequate reading of my text. The Zen issue only makes sense vis-a-vis the cuneal paradigm, and as the latter remains improperly understood, errors are inevitable. The cuneal paradigm—comprising the forces of control, counter-control and the controlled—constitutes a basic (and recurrent) pattern of domination, and one that remains mutually reinforcing. What the review fails to mention, however, is the fact that I propose the existence of a fourth, anti-control force, designated as the uncontrollables. These resolute opponents of the control complex (i.e., the forces of control and counter-control) number among their oppositional activities the attempt to encourage the human majority (the controlled) to slough their multiform shackles and become uncontrollables. Selected Zen practices, "adapted and recontextualized within anarchic praxis," are one of the ways I suggest by which this process can be facilitated. I aver: "techniques must be developed whereby the controlled can experience the psychosocial biodegradation process, with its liberating cathartic effects, and hence regain their forfeited heritage as uncontrollables" (p.9). If such emphases are tantamount to "converting anarchists," or even to converting people to anarchy, then I plead guilty—even though I am far more interested in eversion (overthrowing or turning things inside-out) than conversion. But please have the decency to represent my ideas in an accurate manner, without casting aspersions or resorting to despicable tricks such as referring in inverted commas to

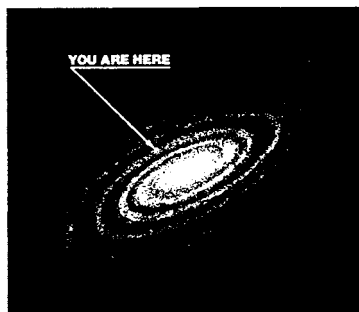
my "argument" and "thinking." Your insulting attempt to belittle and (above all) depoliticize—I use the word in its loosest sense—my work, and to recast me as a missionary to the anarchists, remains thoroughly reprehensible.

I could spend much time exposing the fatuous remarks made in the review about other essays in my volume. For example, there is the ludicrously flat reading of "On Ecdysis" which remains oblivious to the fact that the shedding alluded to in the text explicitly refers as much to the Reichian character armour as to actual garments. Alternatively, there is the questioning of the adjective in my phrase "sacred wilderness"—a term pejoratively counterposed to "wilderness itself (without prior, imposed interpretations)," as if non-judgmental approaches to the wilderness were an everyday occurrence and the term itself not laden with negative connotations in mainstream Western discourse. But these are essentially minor points compared to the treatment of the final essay, "Culture and Anarchy"—a treatment which reveals a profound misunderstanding of my stated intentions.

It cannot be coincidental that the review makes no reference to the preface or the postface to the volume. In part, both make the same essential point: "these essays examine vital issues on the interface between 'fact' and 'fiction,' history and myth, and draw materials from disparate orders of discourse" (p.3). It is precisely the ambivalence, indeed multivalence, that derives from this borderline discourse with which you seem unwilling or unable to cope. Referring to "Culture and Anarchy," you maintain: "Like most religious and ideological 'thinking,' the result is not concerned with what really might have happened to human communities in actuality, as much as it is concerned with how it should have happened in order to preserve the pre-ordained religious or ideological prejudices intact." You are missing the point! altogether here. I am not interested in what happened "in actuality"; if I were, I would be a historian. Instead, following the path blazed by Perlman's *Against History, Against Leviathan!*, I am rejecting the narrative of history and the historical discourse in which it is embodied.

You accuse me of "suspect anthropology," but do you not realize that all anthropology, history or whatever discipline you care to name is entirely suspect? The barriers are down: there are merely different levels of discourses which shade into one another, rather than any sharp distinctions between fiction and nonfiction. Who can accurately represent what happened "in actuality" with regard to a historical event within living memory, let alone events which occurred thousands of years ago and lack all but the most scant documentation? And who should want to do such a thing? Certainly not anarchists, who should be cognizant of the power issues inherent in political and/or artistic representation. You accuse me of writing a "tale," and I acknowledge the truth of your contention. All

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Letters

Reprehensible review

Continued from previous page

discourse consists of stories—narratives which provide a sense of order for people confronted by what you call "the potentially bewildering actuality of lived experiences which escape the confines of ideological categorization." Some texts purport to possess a direct or indirect congruence with that lived experience—the former are considered nonfiction, the latter are characterized as realistic works of fiction—but both are dishonest because they package shared yet unique human experience within precisely those confines of ideological categorization to which you refer.

So what options remain? My answer consists of abandoning the search for the chimera of what may have happened "in actuality," and instead trying to envision the essential, metaphorical truth of what occurred. I am interested in discerning poetic truths rather than literal historical truths, in much the same way that myths embody certain truths of spatio-temporal experience and yet are not anchored in any actual historical events. Your review reminds me of Plato banishing poets from his republic because he cannot cope with the equivocal nature of their creations, which are a tissue of lies and yet contain remarkable truths. The imagination still poses a threat to the "true believers" in neoclassical "critical rationality," whether in the Age of Reason or in the Age of Information: it refuses to be constrained by sense-data or computer data. Only dead things are cut and dry—life's perpetual changes evoke delightful yet sometimes disturbing ambiguities. Loosen up! You praise ludic playfulness in the abstract, but when confronted by a text which embodies this quality you become all defensive. You promote anarchy (which means "without rule," right?), and yet when confronted with a work which—despite conforming to many rules, such as those pertaining to grammar—disregards the rules concerning the proper boundaries between fact and fiction, you dismissively refer to it as "nearly baseless speculation." Now who is keeping their "ideological prejudices intact?"

The same remains true regarding the general argument (no, not "argument") of "Culture and Anarchy." In the foregoing I have stressed the role of fabulation in my text, but I should not like to convey the impression that it is entirely a work of fantasy or fiction. Rather, as indicated above, it operates on the interface between fact and fiction, history and myth. By doing so, it attempts to elude the trap of representation, assuming a more oblique approach to historical actuality, but one not lacking in a curious pertinence. You pour scorn on the hypothesis that "meat-inclusive diets are the original sin which separated us from paradise," and yet is this idea so far-fetched? Maybe in the eyes of a dyed-in-the-wool (or do I mean died-in-the-wool?) speciesist who wishes to keep his "ideological prejudices intact." The fact remains, as I state in my text, that humans are physiologically suited



Untitled Scott Yoos, Olympia, WA.

for a frugivorous diet and are the only species (as far as I know) who do not conform to their innate dietetic structuring. Do tigers munch grass? Do sheep ravage small birds and mammals? And if either began to do so, would not a fateful disequilibrium be introduced into the ecosphere? And if an essentially pacific, frugivorous species—e.g. *Homo sapiens*—turned carnivorous, would not this change involve gradually altering attitudes toward one's fellow beings and to Nature as a whole? Modifications which might set in train the processes which lead to the development of a prototypal control complex? I do not intend to recapitulate my entire argument, but I should have thought it evident to anyone, first that this is a legitimate area of enquiry, and second—given the irrecoverable nature of prehistoric processes "in actuality"—that a visionary or metafactual (as opposed to metafictional) approach to this material remains the only one likely to produce any results. You may dislike the story I tell, but in that case make up your own: do not disparage my tale by saying that you prefer anthropological narratives on the grounds that they are true. They are stories too, but unlike mine they refuse to admit it. At least I am honest.

Sincerely,
John Moore, London, England

Lev replies: Evasions don't make for honesty

To begin with, let me say that I never appreciate threats about how writers will construe our motives if we (horrors!) limit letters to two single-spaced, typewritten pages—probably the most generous length allowance for letters of any publication this size that I know of! I appreciate it even less when, besides, the quality of the letter hardly merits extra space. And such a threat becomes even more incongruous when your rejoinder to the review in question has almost half again as many words to it as the review itself did. Nevertheless, this time we've printed your letter in full, though in the future (and despite my desires other-

wise) we will have to begin observing this limit in more cases due to the rapidly increasing quantity of letters we're receiving.

To get immediately to the heart of your complaints, I must say that I find your evasiveness and refusal to take responsibility for what you've written to nearly equal the best examples of contemporary "spiritual" polemicists. Instead of attempting to back up the problematic contentions of your essays, you choose to attempt to excuse them and explain them away. It seems beyond your comprehension that I might actually understand what you've said full well and still disagree with it! Despite the fact that in my relatively short review I've described some obvious problems with your essays, you choose to ignore the explicit meaning of my criticisms in order to invent other figments more conducive to your feeble "arguments."

Like the general run of New Age theorists, you seem to have the opinion that it is always impolite for others to criticize your writings—and even more, such criticism must always belie some sort of evil motives (intentional "misrepresentation," "selective misreading," "despicable tricks," etc.). Unable to disengage yourself enough from your words to consider how others might see them, you assume that any critique of them must be an attack on you. To use your own words, "loosen up!" I have no intention of charging that you are "not an authentic revolutionary anarchist." I neither know nor care what label you adopt for yourself on this level. I am merely concerned to point out the implications of what you have written and the criticisms that they evoke. I do this, not because I don't like you (you are probably a delightful fellow in the flesh), but because I find the general disregard for coherence and intelligence in contemporary "radical" theory disturbing. I would appreciate it if you would accept what I have to say in this light.

The major problem I have with your pamphlet of essays, is that in it you appear to be more committed to pushing an ideology of spirituality, than you are with critically exploring the relationship of anarchy and ecstasy. This is made painfully obvious by your insistence on speaking

in terms of spirituality despite your recognition that many anarchists would find the "connotations" of the term "antipathetic." What you don't seem to recognize is that many also find the denotations of the term such as well. Though I nowhere (in my review) intentionally employ the words "spirituality" and "religion" as synonyms, your concern about it indicates that they are usually, or at least fairly often, taken as such by most people. Thus any attempt to distinguish them as essentially different concepts demands that extreme care be taken to explain exactly what it is that is meant and exactly why it is necessary to use the words out of their usual contexts. Though you seem to recognize that your peculiar use of words like "spiritual" demands some sort of explanation, you never give one that is in the least convincing.

What you term your "crucial distinction" between religion and spirituality seems to have little or no basis in reality. On the contrary, it would appear to be a rather idiosyncratic distinction based upon your desire to salvage something from the wreckage of institutional religion that will replace certain of its functions. Your passing identification of spirituality with "antinomian, holistic experiential tendencies" is backed up with not a shred of evidence, despite the obvious contradictions involved. In the first place, surely you must realize that the vast majority of people who would identify themselves as committed to spirituality are not antinomians in the sense of being against laws, and it is highly questionable whether there is even a very large minority which would claim to be antinomian in the religious sense of believing that faith alone is necessary for salvation! In the second place, it is hard for me to understand why anyone would think that spirituality has anything to do with holism, when the very concept of the spiritual is predicated upon the division of experience into spiritual and material (or non-spiritual) categories—a division obviously incompatible with any genuinely thoroughgoing holism. If you were really interested in "antinomian" (in the sense of being against laws), "holistic experiential tendencies," you would have no reason to go so far

out of your way to drag in the dualistic metaphysics always implicit in conceptions of spirituality. We need neither "theology, nor...liberation theology," it is true. But even less do we need "a spiritual therapeutics" that would only be likely to confuse and mystify the few tendencies which now exist for "the social shift toward anarchy."

As soon as you drop your ill-conceived attempts to convert us to your bizarre notions of spirituality, I'll happily stop criticizing these attempts! But please, at least take responsibility for your own words. It was your choice to call for anarchists to "reclaim... spirituality," not mine. You're only reaping what you've sown, brother, all evasive maneuvers to deny this notwithstanding. Does it really make any difference whether or not you're talking about "issues on the interface between 'fact' and 'fiction,' history and myth"? You're still talking about things which have a relation to the way we experience our lives here and now, and they will be understood (or dismissed) in that context. The postmodernist smokescreen you lay down simply can't cover the blatantly illogical nature of your efforts to avoid responsibility for what you've said.

In your defense of "Culture and Anarchy" you essentially admit that I am correct in my assessment that you are "not concerned with what really might have happened to human communities...as much as...with how it *should* have happened to preserve [your] pre-ordained... ideological prejudices intact." Yet your complaint that taking "what really *might* have happened to human communities in actuality" seriously would make you a historian is a non sequitur. It might make sense if I was calling for you to deal with what really *did* happen in actuality, but this was obviously not the case. You are free to reject the "narrative of history" all you want as far as I'm concerned, but this still doesn't excuse you from the burden of making sense if you want your ideas to be taken seriously by others! And just because I suggest that your anthropology is "suspect" in no way implies anything at all concerning what I think about other attempts at anthropology (or history, etc.), so there's no need to lecture us all on the futility of attempts to "represent what happened 'in actuality'...events which occurred thousands of years ago and lack all but the most scant documentation!" The real point is that you haven't even (to use your own words) "represented" a plausible "metaphorical truth of what occurred." You've only "represented" an ideological morality tale: eating meat is evil, the original sin responsible for the rise of civilization. And morality tales (note: it's the morality, not the tale that I object to!) have nothing to do with the critical theory of anarchy. Abandon all the chimeras you wish to, but don't blame me if what you've written still doesn't play in Missouri.

You flatter yourself to compare your own work (hardly poetry!) to that of poets like Homer and Euripides who Plato would banish from his republic (for their impiety, you should remember!). But even had you written an epic poem, it could hardly be expected to forever escape all criticism as you seem to wish. You can attempt to cloak your





confused speculations in the clever disguise of "imagination" if you want, but I'm afraid that won't be enough to get us all to swallow them like candied arsenic! And you can even adopt the typical spiritualist ploy of identifying any unwanted criticism with the excesses of rationalism, but in this case I'm calling your bluff—since if my criticisms are invalid for this reason, your own criticisms would certainly have just as little (and probably still less!) cogency. You can play at dismissing rationality (i.e. making sense, human understanding) if you want, but if you are entirely serious about it no one will likely care if you just go your own way making complete nonsense about culture and anarchy, or about anything else you choose.

And if your leaden text urging us all to reclaim spirituality embodies "ludic playfulness," you must attach a quite different meaning to those words than I do.

Grotesquely simplistic anti-Malthusianism

Murray Bookchin and Lev Chernyi continue to give the same grotesquely simplistic interpretation of the population problem in *Anarchy* #23 as have traditional leftists for years. First of all, I am not familiar with the Population-Environment Balance group Chernyi highlights, and it does indeed sound as if they have a dangerously limited focus. However, Chernyi and Bookchin then go to work to present the familiar caricature that anyone concerned with human overpopulation is a "racist," "fascist," "nationalist," "idiot," "reactionary neo-Malthusian" who wants to replace "human life with a new inhuman form of eco-brutalism" and so on.

I have read both installments of Murray Bookchin's "The population myth" in *Green Perspectives*, and it would be much easier for me to see his strong points if he weren't given over to such extreme exaggeration and name calling. He starts by ridiculing the notion that "human beings are populating the earth in 'unprecedented' numbers and 'devouring' its resources" as a myth.

Oh really? Are we to assume Murray thinks human beings are not populating the Earth in "unprecedented" numbers, and would like to produce hard evidence to the contrary? In their *State of the World*; 1989, Worldwatch reports that human population is no longer expected to level off at around 10 billion or roughly twice the current numbers, but may keep on growing to 12 or 14 billion sometime in the next century. The reasons for this are many, but certainly the current fundamentalist (whether Christian, Moslem, Marxist or capitalist) "pro-life"—or more properly, "pro-natalist"—movement that has swept the globe certainly hasn't helped any.

Of course the pro-natalists have done nicely in this country, with three successive terms of far-right imbeciles in the White House openly hostile to family planning efforts. At the U.N. Conference on Population in Mexico City in 1984, the U.S. representatives were the laughing stock of the world with their "full speed ahead on population growth" position. Rea-

gan Republican Ben Wattenburg penned the highly proclaimed book, *The Birth Dearth*, claiming the U.S. is already seriously underpopulated, and therefore may not be able to wage successful wars in the future. But where are these developments dealt with by Bookchin and Chernyi? Their silence is deafening.... But alas, to speak of population is to run the risk of being branded a "reactionary Malthusian," so, like Senator Joseph McCarthy in the '50s—with a different ideological twist—censorship of certain key information is essential.

Just one example to show how shallow their analysis of the population problem is, they apparently have not even bothered to find out that Thomas Malthus sternly disapproved of such contraceptions as existed in his day, and in proper Victorian style advocated abstinence or late marriage instead. In an interesting article in *Horizon*, Autumn 1975, J.W. Burrow writes:

"There can be no doubt that he would have hated the use of his name in 'Malthusian' or 'neo-Malthusian' as an euphemism for contraception and its advocates. But some of the younger political economists, notably John Stuart Mill, and radical journalists like Francis Place and Richard Carlile, were uninhibited by Malthus's scruples and deliberately set out to spread information about birth control, even though publications on the subject long continued to risk prosecution for obscenity."

Implicit here is the liberatory aspect of the birth control movement, and the early radicals like Emma Goldman and Margaret Sanger who went to jail attempting to let poor families know that it was not in their best interests to have large families. But this aspect is either conveniently played down by the current pro-natalists of the left, or else ignored altogether.

Finally, I would dispute Bookchin's claim that the "predictions made by many neo-Malthusians (meaning anyone concerned with human population, apparently) seem almost insanely ridiculous," and the glowing picture he paints of the glut of oil supplies, untrammelled living space and grain production he seems to see everywhere. I think the warnings made by many of the early ecologists—living in an era when the motto of dominant society was, "There are only two things, people and resources, and the latter exists solely for the use of the former," were surprisingly on target, and will become even more so as the severity of the current ecologic crisis unravels. Meanwhile Bookchin still defends open strip-mining as an ecologically viable process (see his answer to me in *Kick It Over*, March 1989), and is ambiguous as to whether or not he thinks genetic engineering is one of the methods humans should use to help "speed" evolution along.

I would agree with Bookchin that many ecologists have often neglected social and political factors in their analysis of population problems, and that he is uniquely situated to help them gain a better perspective on these factors. However, in my estimation, calling people names, historically, has not been the most effective method of

The deep ecology movement and ecologism

By Arne Naess

The article by George Bradford, "How Deep is Deep Ecology? A Challenge to Radical Environmentalism" (published in the *Fifth Estate*, Vol. 22, No. 3, Fall 1987) actualizes the advice of some old supporters of the deep (in contrast to the shallow, "reform" or "business as usual") ecology movement to give up the expression "deep ecology." Since the term caught on some years ago it is sometimes used to name views foreign and strange to the original supporters. But such a fate of an expression is common and should not itself justify change of terminology. There is little in the article by George Bradford that makes me doubt that he is a firm and articulate supporter of the deep ecology movement. Doubt attaches to how he conceives the population problem. That is, he may say that if one "defines" the general tenets of the movement as I do, then he will not find it adequate to be called a supporter.

In a very tentative 8 point formulation of general views in common among most, if not all supporters of the deep ecology movement, the first sentence of point 4 reads as follows:

"The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population."

From numerous interviews I concluded that people had difficulties in concentration on the meaning of this sentence without immediately shifting towards the problem of how a reduction could occur or be carried out without assuming either terrible catastrophes or the violation of human rights. Now I use a version with reference not to a substantial decrease but to a "substantially lower number." That is, the question of how to reduce within the framework of an acceptable ethics is seen as a separate problem. Perhaps unsolvable. And the question arises, why bother? My view is that the vast problems of how to achieve a rich diversity of cultures with access to a high quality of life would be less unlikely to be solved with a smaller total population. Anyhow, I think that many firm supporters of the deep ecological movement do not speculate about how a reduction might take place except through catastrophes they hope will not occur.

The second and last sentence of point 4 reads as follows: *"The flourishing of non-human life requires such a decrease."*

Why bother with definite sentences like this one? Because so many authors within environmentalism have asked for a kind of definition of "deep ecology." To define the essence of a social movement is something I do not believe is fruitful. Tentative formulation of important aspects may be of some help to the questioners.

The second sentence is motivated by a pessimism that I hope is excessive: The prestige of the wasteful life in the richest countries and within the elites in the poor countries is and will for a long time be so formidable that excessive, large scale interference with non-human life is inevitable. Until economic and technological policies in the richest countries are deeply changed, one cannot expect the poorer countries to stop looking for "development" in the direction of the rich. This implies that until deep changes in the rich countries are not only seriously considered but under way, the aim to reduce the total population rather than just to stabilize it (at 8 or 10 billion??) is acceptable as a long range vision of practical importance.

As I understand the deep ecology movement any population policy that smacks of social Darwinism or social Malthusianism will be scornfully rejected. The social and political aspect of the movement is incon-

testable. The tentative, necessarily rather abstract formulation of point 5 and 6 of the survey mentioned, reads as follows:

"5. Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening."

"6. Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present."

In the early '70s it seemed safe to publish general principles of "ecopolitics"—politics required within the frameworks of the deep ecology movement. Today the situation is seen to be much more complex than at that time. Decentralization, self-reliance, appropriate technology...—yes, of course! But without very much stronger global solidarity, global outlook in general, such slogans may not contribute adequately to point towards the solution of the main problems. For this reason the formulation of point 6 does not contain such obviously important key terms.

From the very beginning the contrast shallow vs. deep ecology movement embraced social and political aspects. It has even been proposed to use the term "political ecology" rather than "deep ecology." Critical analysis of course included from the very start private initiative capitalism, state capitalism (Soviet Union, Eastern Europe), and the "mixed economies" of Scandinavia. In Europe political aspects have so far been more debated than in U.S.A. George Sessions does not, as pointed out by George Bradford, discuss political aspects of deep ecology, but he was collaborating with me when formulating point 6. I agree with George Bradford that the social and political aspects need to be brought more to the foreground among the theorists of the movement. But, going back to the population problem, complete agreement among supporters of the deep ecology movement is neither possible nor desirable. Roughly I suppose most of them, even in the U.S., endorse what George Bradford says p.22 of his article:

"The population question can never be addressed until having fewer children can become a reasonable option. That means freedom for women from male domination, and an agrarian social transformation that reunites agriculture and nutrition, renews self-reliance and subsistence, and creates equality. If deep ecologists can recognize that these social questions must be resolved in order to reconcile humanity with the natural world, that a whole earth vision must be grounded in the social, they will make the leap they desire in their understanding and practice. Human liberation is integrally bound up with the liberation of nature, and therefore is truly 'deep ecological.'"

I trust that George Bradford by "addressing" the population question in the above quotation means something not much less adequate than "solving." Obviously we must in a wide sense "address" the population question today and not wait for general "freedom for woman from male domination" or any other deep social and political change. But the humane and effective handling of the question depends largely upon the speed of major social and political change.

[We've printed this letter, originally addressed to the Fifth Estate, to let readers judge for themselves whether this vague and equivocal "correction" by deep ecology "founder" Arne Naess merits consideration as a true attempt at a change of heart, or mere political waffling. It remains unclear to me which it represents. -Lev]

getting them to alter their views.

Bill McCormick,
Charlottesville, VA.

Ps. In reference to another issue, you wisely suggest that "people listen to as many sides of the question as possible before jumping to judgment." As regards *Fifth Estate's* "demolition" of deep ecology, I am enclosing a letter to FE by deep ecology founder Arne Naess [reprinted elsewhere on this page] that they have suppressed and refused to print, meanwhile devoting entire issues to answering such laughable fictional characters as "Miss Anthropy." Isn't this something like endeavoring to do a thorough critique of Marxism or Christianity, while ignoring the words of Marx and Christ and focussing instead on the questionable statements of some minor Marxist or Christian functionary?

I am also enclosing another short piece by Naess that predates

the Bradford/Bookchin blasts by several years and makes painstakingly clear that not only do Bookchin and Bradford not understand what deep ecology is (something M.A.J. thought up, perhaps?), but they have repeatedly bent over backwards to distort and lie about it. Like—how many more special issues of FE will Bradford have to do before deep ecology is finally "dead"?!

Of course I don't have especially high hopes that you will treat the enclosed any fairer than your pals at FE, who call me "pathological," "nauseating," "dangerous," etc. for challenging their party line on deep ecology. I used to use the word "anarchist" interchangeably with "free thinker," "truth seeker," etc. I am now beginning to wonder if I was wrong.

Lev responds:

You're only proving Bookchin right

It would be hard to invent a more obviously narrow-minded interpretation of Bookchin's concise treatment of "The population myth" than you've done here. Neither Bookchin in his relatively level-headed essay reprinted in *Anarchy* #23, nor myself in my exposure of the obviously reactionary Environmental-Population Balance organization in that issue, has "work[ed] to present the familiar caricature that anyone concerned with human overpopulation is a 'racist,' 'fascist,' 'nationalist,' 'idiot,' 'reactionary neo-Malthusian' who wants to replace 'human life with a new inhuman form of eco-brutalism' as you claim. What both Bookchin and I are concerned with are the immediate social and political implications of any appeals to the "overpopulation problem" which refuse to

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Letters

Proving Bookchin right

Continued from previous page

locate that "problem" first of all and always within the historical, social and political contexts from which it has arisen. I really don't understand why you find it so necessary to level this kind of baseless charge when the intent of Bookchin's essay and my short piece are so overwhelmingly obvious.

The only possible instance of "extreme exaggeration and name calling" that I see in Bookchin's essay published in *Anarchy*, is his characterization of Earth First!'s "Back to the Pleistocene" slogan as "idiotic" when it seems to me plainly tongue-in-cheek. Certainly he has been less restrained, and thus often less convincing, in his comments elsewhere—one reason why we haven't published some of his other criticisms (including the second part of the essay that did appear in *Anarchy*).

For anyone who has actually read the essay by Bookchin we reprinted, it is probably unnecessary to explain that he does not start by "ridiculing the notion"—in itself—that "human beings are populating the earth in 'unprecedented' numbers and 'devouring' its resources" "as a myth" [emphases mine]. What he ridicules are these kinds of "prophecies" divorced from any consideration of the actual historical, social and political realities. What do you think his whole essay is about? Are you so stone deaf to rational argument that you must insist on reading his words in the most inverted and illogical ways?

Since you don't seem to be aware of the ridiculous nature of the reading you've given his essay, let me point it out to you so that you can no longer ignore your errors. Bookchin never once argues that "human beings are not populating the Earth in 'unprecedented' numbers." What he explicitly and relentlessly argues is that "this arithmetic mentality which disregards the social context of demographics is incredibly short-sighted." He argues that if deep ecologists and others are going to accept the existence of capitalism as a given, then "anything we have to say about population is basically meaningless." In other words the root of the ecological crisis lies in our hierarchical and commodity-production social formations, not in superficially-constructed demographic issues. The absolute failure of so many "deep" ecologists to recognize this blindingly obvious point is what has led to the general dismissal of "deep ecology" by all the more sophisticated and thoughtful ecological radicals.

Your concern over the growing power of "pro-natalist" movements is exemplary. However, you're quite wrong to impute "pro-natalist" sentiments to Bookchin, myself, or just about anyone else in the anarchist spectrum. Aside from a couple of anarchist pacifist cranks (disregarded by the vast majority of anarchists), the anarchist movement seems to be almost 100% opposed to the "anti-choice" and "fundamentalist" movements you speak of—and this is despite anarchists' extensive divisions on almost any other question!

Your concern over Thomas Malthus's position on contraception is



Untitled. Reprinted from *Hocha!* #67/68 (Urban Gwerder, CH-7243, Switzerland).

entirely (and even humorously) beside the point. That there is a liberatory aspect to the birth-control movement is obvious, as is made clear in George Bradford's recent and highly important *Fifth Estate* review (of Betsy Hartmann's *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs*) entitled "Woman's Freedom: Key to the population question." However, just as clear is that there is a reactionary aspect to birth-control when it is employed by an elite to control the birth-rates of non-elite populations. The fact is that Margaret Sanger herself was a reactionary in this regard, and this is what has actually been "played down" or "ignored altogether" by the naive eco-radicals" who cannot recognize the extreme dangers involved in an uncritical support of any and all birth-control/population control efforts.

It's a shame, but true, that just as Christianity has time and again been intellectually "demolished," it retains its hold on millions of its indoctrinated pawns around the world. In the same way, I'm quite convinced that deep ecology has been entirely discredited by George Bradford and Murray Bookchin (in his better moments), as well as by the outspokenly reactionary positions of self-proclaimed supporters like David Foreman and Ed Abbey! But just because an ideology has been thoroughly discredited in one place and time, does not by a longshot mean that its power to dominate the thinking of its cadres has been removed. If only it were so simple!

Emotional commodities

TIME & EXPENDITURE

YIELD & PROFITABILITY

The "relationship" has an economic dynamic. Emotional reactions to abstract terms such as love are enculturated, making it difficult to critique at its bases. Because of the highly positive moral implications of concepts such as "love" and the "relationship" (and their apparent inseparability), people will not examine the relationship as a unit of misery, but rather will look upon them on an individual basis, or place them into various genres—

long term, short term, serious, platonic, open, monogamous, etc. While discussions of various manifestations of the emotional economy are nothing short of necessary, it is also time to look at how each relationship relates to an underlying economic dynamic.

I enjoyed the dialogue on monogamous and non-monogamous relationships that appeared in the last issue of *Anarchy* [Note: #20/21]. An interesting analysis of that discussion can be developed from the point of view of either Feral's piece on economized love or any of my rants on emotional commodities. As a (vehemently) non-monogamous person, I'd found myself strangely having the same relationship problems as monogamous people. What I hadn't realized is that we were holding the same relationships; different genre, but the same media. I'd been trying to create equitable relationships, leaving the real question of the nature of interpersonal relationships unchallenged. It's like trying to make sure everybody has the same amount of money, but never thinking of abandoning currency altogether.

Melen touched upon the relationship between jealousy and frustration in relations. (She spoke of being frustrated when you want to be with your lover at a particular time but are denied it.) What often passes for jealousy in a non-monogamous situation is really nothing more than a question of economic distribution. Your access is limited as other people are using up time on the emotional meter. When your economic situation is transformed and someone else suddenly can access more than yourself, the economic dynamic can lead to resentment and, in some cases, jealousy. (Another economic metaphor: an angry person on the low end of distribution can either aspire to overthrow the system of distribution or wish to be on the high end. Jealousy is like the latter.)

This is something I thought long and hard about because there was a situation once where I had a lot of shit going down in my life and I thought I needed someone to

comfort me. I turned to a lover who was not available to me and the results were disastrous. The situation made me look at my behavior and extend my philosophy into that realm. Do I value a person more when they can make themselves available to me when it is best for me? How do I feel when I'd rather be with X, but Y really wants to see me? Does Y ever try to manipulate me and do I feel like Y's affection for me will be lessened as a punishment for not being a good (available) lover? (In other words, will my access be (reciprocally) limited and will the yield and profitability of the relationship be threatened?) Time and consumption are essential parts of the economy of love; we "love" others in relation to ourselves—because they make us feel good, because they validate our ideas, or make us feel superior, or they make us feel loved, or fill some other void left by this world of deprivation. Don't believe it? How many people stay with people they would otherwise not love just because that person makes "love" available to them? That's one unfortunate capitulation symptomatic of the scarcity.

All "love" is conditional. (Haven't you ever been highly suspicious of people that have been abused in one way or another but claim to still "love" their tormentor?) Take the aforementioned person that I know. I got really pissed off because he could not help me with my emotional needs; the fact that he had equally pressing emotional needs, although it may have occurred to me, drowned in the emotional tides. When I realized that my "love" (which really had not existed) was conditional insofar as he helped fill the voids in my life, I realized that I am the repo man who takes away your furniture when you don't make your payments on time. After being mad at myself for a few minutes, I recalled a particular theme of conversation that I often find myself in. I assert that there is no such thing as human nature. Many people have asked me, "don't you think it's

human nature to want to be loved? Everybody needs to be loved." Once I thought that was the only element of human nature (trying to defend love on moral grounds) but I realized that our desire to be loved may very well be a reaction to a world where love is a commodity, one which you must earn, and are lucky to do so at that. Love and respect are not given factors in this world. "Love" is subject to the law of supply and demand; if there's an adequate, regenerating supply, there's no conscious demand unless the object is commoditized or made scarce. If love were a given, earning love would not be a social consideration. Period.

As a result of commoditized love, people find themselves in an emotional hierarchy according to how much love they can acquire. People are sometimes born advantaged because they possess a certain appearance, or they may painfully cultivate one. Others must learn to cultivate what Cosmo calls charm (what I call successful psychological manipulation), and can play social-sexual games masterfully. And what of those who don't "merit" love? What are the repercussions in that? What of those who refuse the rules and decide that self-love and egoism are the only truly liberating forms of love that exist for them? They are called derogatory names and are told that they are "incapable of love," are "only afraid of getting hurt," are "afraid to commit" and a whole slew of things that belong in an arena that they aren't even playing in.

(The last sentence touches upon another important issue that, because of space considerations, I won't go into in depth: that is, the question of perceptions of selfishness and altruism. The question of selfishness vs. altruism is tainted when pretending to give rather than to take or to do something for the good of others, rather than the good of themselves.)

Personally, I can understand why it's especially hard not to fall into these relationship traps. At times I so rarely meet people who I really clic with who happen to be both alive and living in N.Y. that when I do, there may be a tendency to concretize the relationship. It's never been a matter of private access, but access in general; to me it's never a question of whether we should fuck other people or not, but rather if we will ever see each other again...how about tomorrow? You don't want to lose what you've just found. Although that kind of loss may be topically different from the disgusting "I don't want to lose you" pleas of worried lovers, the very term "loss" implies some sort of possession, or at the very least, access to. So, although underplayed, access is one of the primary forces of the relationship dynamic.

The relationship is an (economic) equation; your investment is both your time and expenditure and all are looking for high yield and profitability. This is how we determine how well a relationship "works" and whether it's beneficial to continue it. (Would a good economist keep putting capital into an unprofitable investment? —Only in a desperate plea to re-



coup the initial expenditure.) What does it all mean? Damned if I know. If there were no contrast between love and its void, if there were no scarcity of love, would it lose its importance? Perhaps it has no importance, or at very least, its importance has been exaggerated by its elusiveness.

Laure A., NYC, NY.

Fermenting factionalism

Lev,

Experiencing the tragic immediacy of America's arboreal genocide, the destruction of the last temperate rainforests not locked up in government-defined preserves for privileged campers—experiencing the fetid oppressiveness of America's showcase jails for defending those forests—experiencing the travesty of America's court system and its lying officers—I realize that it is our experiencing of reality that defines it, not our circular dialogue. While anarchic direct action slows the destruction of these ancient trees, anarchic diatribe does little except to increase the market for their rent flesh: the paper you print on.

Granted, *Anarchy* furthers necessary self-critical analysis, but this magazine's finest hour may be as fire-starter in the offices of offending corporations. Ideas not acted upon are like blood clots, neural constipation of the brain. Your academic education limits your ability to learn, and to act.

We are mired in arguments over terminology and symbolism. The flag-burning at this summer's Earth First! Rendezvous is an excellent example. While less than a half-dozen participants supported the flying of an American flag, even fewer supported its burning at a gathering focussed on alliance and ecological resistance.

The reasoning for the torching was astute, but the timing stunk. One of the many, time-consuming episodes that followed this act broke up a workshop on focussing the principles of anarchy and environmentalism on concerted action. In this case, we were as controlled and manipulated by our rejection of a symbol as by the symbol itself.

As Jakubal points out in his most recent letter to you, the differences in style and vernacular are irrelevant during the shared experience of allied and direct action. At the Kalmiopsis action where I was arrested, situationalists joined pantheists and Rainbow Family extroverts in opposing the desecration of ourselves/environment.

Your high-brow repudiation of Bill McCormick's call for ecologically-sound ethics [*Anarchy* #22, page 29] was mental masturbation and fermenting factionalism at its best. The value of desire is in practice, not theory.

Unlike our friend, Zerzan, you recognize the valuable distinction between desires in harmony with nature and desires in opposition to nature. Can't you see also that unalienated desire, deepest innate instincts, represent the desires of a wild, symbiotic whole?

We do not pronounce you "guilty," only "responsible." Responsible for what you don't do as well as what you do. For oxygen burned-up pontificating instead of

physically/primally resisting. You fear not only "ecological moralism," but also "wholism." The interconnectedness of all life sounds like entrapment to you, cloistered in your secular illusion of separateness, independence and correctness.

Ecocentric perception does not "subordinate us to nature," but recognizes our place of movement within nature. If nature was truly limited to our experience of it, as you suggest, the world would be far more finite and fallible than I know it to be. How can I describe color to the voluntarily blind, love-making to the deliberately celibate? We are not subordinated! We are reconnected, re-membered, revitalized, reactivated by our immersion into us/nature!

Anarchy is your soapbox, Lev, safely ensconced from primal experience and real opposition. Try something new: Give up your usual "Lev has the last word" postscript format for once. Write a piece advocating something. Give us ideas that, like bullets, arm our resistance. What is your vision of environmentally-soundrevolution? Then...then...let me write the terse reply that follows.

You, in your studious pursuit of liberation, suffer the domination of a ceaseless commentator, a flippant objectifier, the ultimate dogmatic despot: your own "rational" mind. Leave this dictator at home with your shoes sometime, and take a walk in the woods.

Gone feral,
Lone Wolf Circles, Reserve, NM.

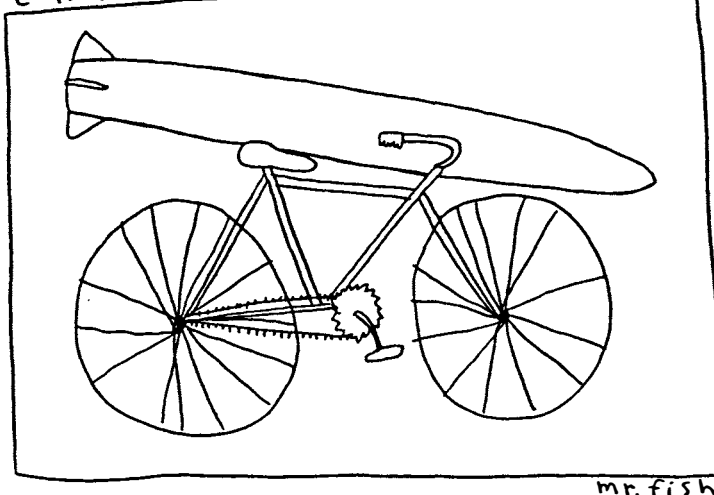
Lev responds: Critical theory and action

It amazes me that so many radicals in general have such resentment towards critically thinking out where we stand in our fight with the forces of our genocidal and ecocidal civilization. Though, of course, the most resentful are always those who have their own little ideologies already at hand that neatly tie up the world in nifty categories that can't bear critical scrutiny. They never cease to get upset when called to account.

I've gotten a lot of heat, and will certainly continue to do so, from those who think that the proper place for theory is in the mouths of uncritical cheerleaders at the sidelines urging the real players on! But I'm simply not interested in playing other people's manipulative games. I won't sell my services to any of the ideological illusions of our time. And I really think that there are an increasing number of other people around who share these feelings.

For these people and myself, it seems quite obvious that we need theory every bit as much as we need practice. And to denigrate one in favor of the other is like cutting off one hand in order to strengthen the other. Sure action is necessary! Carefully thought out action as well as spontaneous, wild action whenever circumstances allow them. But just as important is theory. The eminently practical theory of tactical consideration as well as more abstract and holistic theory. And it is always the mixture of the two in appropriate amounts that makes for truly explosive situations. For example, the flag-burning at the EF! Rendezvous: here was an act perfectly

environmentalism



timed to get people thinking about some of the residual, counterproductive myths that still permeate the EF! milieu.

While I don't find your newly expressed repudiation of guilt-mongering or biocentric hierarchy to be very convincing, I will allow that you are fairly correct in calling *Anarchy* my soapbox, though I seek to share it with as many others who want to live freely as I can. However, as anyone who really thought about it might conclude, publishing *Anarchy* is hardly a project that would be undertaken by anyone who wanted to be "safely ensconced" anywhere! A better description of my participation in this project might be "constantly sticking my neck out in front of a largely hostile mob!"

As far as your exclusive claims to "wholism" and "primal experience" are concerned, you can try to imprint them with your own registered trademark, but I'm afraid they remain in the public domain for any of us other undeserving beings to use as we see fit, too. Why not give up with your constant, defensive accusations that I'm "academic," "high-brow," "pontificating," or engaging in "mental masturbation," etc. Then you might just realize that I not only want to live more freely and wildly—as you do, but that critical theory is exactly what we need to help us find our way there.

From-the-heart

Friends,

Thanks for reprinting my "Man wearing skirt" essay. Since I began wearing them sometimes a couple of other men here have, inspired (as I was) to be brave by example. I look at that essay now as putting a little more faith in how "liberating" this could be than I have now. But still I am proud of it as a from-the-heart speech.

Thanks also for your brief review of *Ovo* #7. However, I sent it to you to be reviewed in *North American Anarchist Review* rather than *Anarchy*. [Note: We don't generally intend to do periodical reviews in *NAAR*, so if we hadn't reviewed it in *Anarchy* (which we assumed would be just as good), it wouldn't have been reviewed at all. We do encourage publishers to send books for review in *NAAR*, though.] How is the *NAAR* project going?

Pressure Drop Press (POB 460754, S.F., CA. 94146), publishers of *Threat By Example*, are accepting contributions for a new book titled *Sabotage in the American Workplace*. Anyone with such experiences should contact them.

type I believe in.

For over a year I've been talking with anarchists who support a decentralized anarchist event, occurring generally at the same time in many places, rather than one large gathering. I am enclosing my full proposal for this....

There is a new collectively-owned, non-profit bookstore and coffeehouse in Knoxville called *The Black and the Read*, located on the corner of 16th and Laurel on the University campus. Hours are 7-11 Sunday through Thursday. Many progressive and revolutionary publications are carried. Coffee and tea are served, and there are plenty of tables & chairs to lounge on. The bookstore also contains a large anti-authoritarian lending library. The collective that runs it has experienced the same problems any collective does but seems to be learning from them.

My magazine *Ovo* is gathering material for next October's theme of "experiments and evidence." An SASE to me will explain this project more but briefly, the "experiments" should be things people have done to themselves (their body, relationships, living environment, etc.) while the "evidence" should be of the world being a strange place (à la Charles Fort). All contributions will be considered and answered.

Hope all is going well for you. Please consider adding me to your list of *Anarchy* contacts.

Trevor
POB 23061
Knoxville, TN. 37933-1061

Proposal for the decentralization of the 1990 anarchist event

There are at least two reasons not to hold a centralized anarchist gathering in 1990. First, any single gathering will be too far away or at a bad time for some people to participate. Second, as anarchists we should be setting an example against the centralization of power and culture.

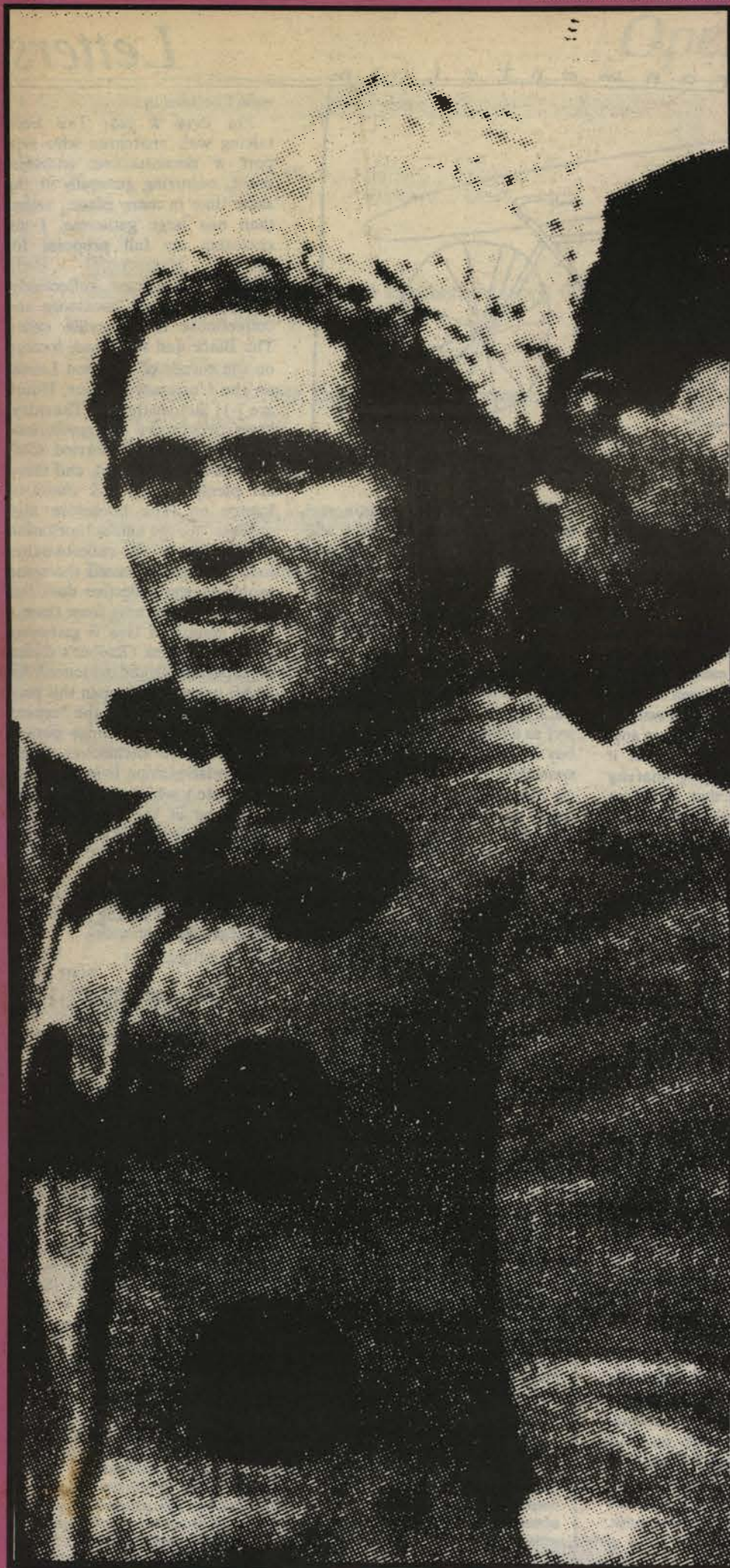
Conversely, there are many reasons to create a decentralized anarchist event. This event could take the form of regional gatherings held all over the U.S. (and the world). Everyone could participate no matter their location, schedule or income. The responsibilities and rewards of the anarchist community would be spread out among all of us. This would be a test of anarchism in action: each event would be different yet there would be no hierarchy as to which was more important. We are not proposing that all gatherings be decentralized, only the one in 1990. Some have suggested a national gathering every odd year, regional gatherings even years.

The decentralized anarchist event could take any form the participants chose. Each region could decide how large a group it could support before it needed to federate into smaller, localized gatherings. Each gathering could decide how it wanted to solve problems previous national gatherings had, such as food, housing, jail support, days of action, etc. Different regional gatherings could focus on specific issues within the anarchist community (native peoples, gender and sexuality, prisoner support) and make use of their location (mountains, coastlines, desert). The event could be scheduled to occur all over during a short period of time or staggered over a month, allowing travel between several locations. Local anarchists could strengthen their culture and out-of-towners could learn about other communities.

There are disadvantages to decentralizing this year's gathering. National gatherings are the only time many of us can see each other. Regional gatherings might limit the number of new contacts made. A decentralized event would require a new sort of organization.... Reports on how the gatherings went would be difficult to bring together under one cover (if that's important...). And of course, there is no reason to hold regional gatherings in addition to national ones.

Having made this proposal, there are now decisions to be made within the anarchist movement. Is decentralization of the 1990 anarchist gathering a good idea? What time frame should this event occur within? What cities will host regional gatherings? Is there a group or publication that could act as a clearinghouse?

Anarchist Black Cross Knoxville
POB 23061, Knoxville, TN. 37933
The Alternative
U.T. Box 16056, Knoxville, TN. 37996
Workers Solidarity Alliance
Box 8436, Knoxville, TN. 37996-4900



Design: Freddie Baer

NESTOR MAKHNO

OCTOBER 27, 1889 —
OCTOBER 27, 1989

"To all the workers of the city and its environs!

Workers, your city is for the present occupied by the Revolutionary Insurrectionary (Makhnovist) Army. This army does not serve any political party, any power, any dictatorship. On the contrary, it seeks to free the region of all political power, of all dictatorship. It strives to protect the freedom of action, the free life of the workers, against all exploitation and domination.

The Makhnovist Army does not therefore represent any authority. It will not subject anyone to any obligations whatsoever. Its role is confined to defending the freedom of the workers. The freedom of the peasants and the workers belongs to themselves, and should not suffer any restrictions.

It is up to the workers and peasants themselves to act, to organize themselves, to reach mutual understanding in all fields of their lives, in so far as they desire it, and in whatever way they may think right.

They must, therefore, know right away, that the Makhnovist Army will not impose on them, will not dictate to them, will not order them to do anything. The Makhnovists can only help them, by giving them opinions or advice, by putting at their disposal the intellectual, military, and other forces that they need. But they cannot, and in any case, will not govern them or prescribe for them in any way."

A Manifesto of the Makhnovist Army

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